Student resource for grades 7 to 12

Make School Work for You

a resource
for junior and senior high students
who want to be more successful learners

Make School
Work for You

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This document is intended for:

Students	✓
Teachers	
Administrators	
Counsellors	
Parents	✓
General Public	

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How to use this book

This book is a tool kit filled with practical ideas that you can use to be more successful in school. *Make School Work for You* is aimed at junior and senior high school students who want to be better learners.

Inside you'll find ideas you can use to:
- know yourself
- get organized
- make every class count
- use tests to show what you know
- present your learning
- get along with others
- get people on your side
- stay motivated.

Read over the ideas. Think about what they mean for you and use them to make school work for you.

Make School Work for You is a joint project of the Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta and Alberta Learning. A teacher implementation guide is also available. Both are companion pieces to the teacher resource, *Teaching Students with Learning Disabilities* and the parent resource, *The Parent Advantage: Helping Children Become More Successful Learners at Home and School, Grades 1–9*.

This student resource is available on audio CD for students with print disabilities.

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CHAPTER

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- Know Yourself
- Get Organized
- Make Every Class Count
- Use Tests to Show What You Know
- Present Your Learning
- Get Along with Others
- Get People on Your Side
- Stay Motivated

Make School

Work for You

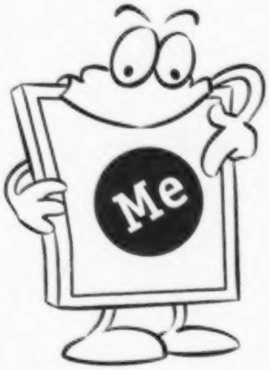
CHAPTER 1

Know Yourself

Doing better in school begins with you! Take a close look at your own strengths, needs, work habits and learning preferences. This will help you identify what you have and what you need to make school work for you.

Face the facts

If you want to be successful in school, you have to work hard. That's the reality. The good news is that working harder and smarter pays off! Doing well in school brings many rewards.



Know what you want

Figure out why you want to do well in school. The more specific the reasons, the more likely you are to succeed.

- Do you want to take an advanced course in a subject you like?
- Do you want to get into college, university or a special training program?
- Do you want to earn a scholarship?
- Do you want to please your parents?
- Do you want to impress your friends?
- Do you want to prove to yourself that you can do it?
- Do you need to keep up your marks so you can play on a school sports teams?

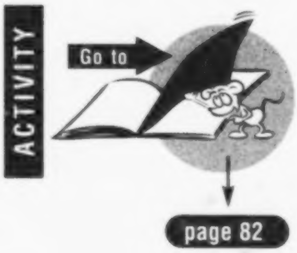
Write down your goals and read them over at least once a week as a reminder of what you are working toward.

Know where school success leads

Think long and hard about what kind of life you want after high school. It is never too early to think about the kind of career you want. Do some research. Find out what different kinds of jobs are all about. Find out what training is needed and what kind of high school credits and marks you must earn to be eligible for this training. Use this information to help you set goals.

Know your challenges

Complete an in-class inventory and take an honest look at your challenges. Decide what you can work on yourself and what you may need assistance with. Talk to teachers and your parents, and find out what they think your learning challenges are.



Go to the *Uncover your challenges inventory* on page 82 in the activity section. Use the questions to start identifying your in-class strengths and needs.

It may be interesting to do this inventory more than once during the school year to see how your in-class skills improve.

Build on your strengths

Know your strengths so you can use them to help overcome learning challenges. Know how you learn best and use this information when you are choosing assignment options, finding ways to study or making suggestions to your teacher. If you have a strength, such as drawing or playing a particular sport, work at this skill so it can work for you.

Find the *Know your own strengths inventory* on page 84 in the activity section. Use this inventory to identify the personal resources and skills you have that can help you become a better learner and more successful student. Use this information as you set goals for yourself. Knowing your strengths can also be a real confidence-booster.

ACTIVITY
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page 84

Know what works for you

Make a list of all the things that help make learning work for you. Talk to your parents and teachers — they may have some good ideas and observations. Be as specific as possible. Write down all these ideas so you can keep them in mind when making everyday choices and decisions in the classroom. Consider what works when you pack your backpack, choose a place to sit or a project topic.

Get feedback from:

- parents
- friends
- siblings
- coaches
- teachers
- report cards

Look over the questions on the *What works for me inventory* on page 85 of the activity section. Use these questions to think about your own learning styles and work habits. You can use this information to make personal adjustments in the classroom and as a starting point for talking with your teacher about your personal learning needs.

ACTIVITY
Go to
page 85

Know what resources are available

Ask your teacher or counsellor what special resources are available in your school and community.

Extra Support	• Are there tutors available? What is the cost? • Do some teachers offer extra help? • Are there organized study groups or workshops? • Are there school staff or volunteers willing to proofread written assignments, or audiotape readings and/or test questions?
Technology and Courses	• Are audiotapes of course texts available in the school? • Is there a computer lab for your use? • Is there someone who can answer your questions when you're working in the lab? • Are there software programs available to help you review certain skills you've covered in class? • Can you borrow equipment for special projects, such as tape recorders and video cameras?
Library Services	• Does the library have extra hours? • Is there a librarian who can explain how to use the system or help get you started on your research?
Specialized Programs	• Are there courses or programs designed especially for students with learning difficulties?

Ask for what you need

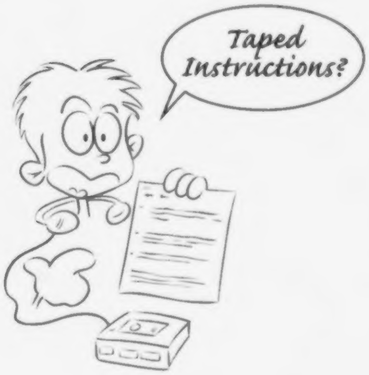
When you need something changed in the classroom, it's your responsibility to bring it to the attention of your teacher. Plan and practise what you want to say. Always go with a solution and a positive attitude.

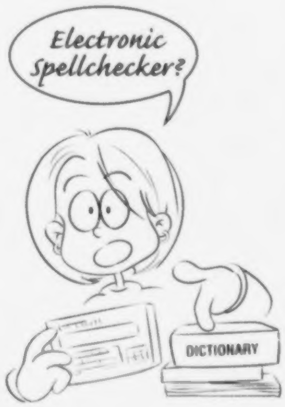
1. State the problem and give an example.
2. Let people know you are working on this problem (so they don't think you're trying to avoid work or are not trying hard enough).
3. Briefly explain your solution to the problem.
4. Ask for their co-operation or permission for this accommodation (solution).

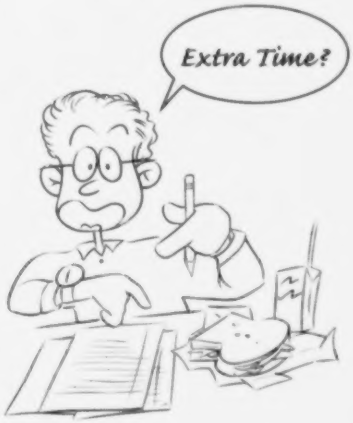
"I am working hard to improve my reading skills but I often misread exam questions. My understanding greatly improves when someone else reads the questions to me. One of the peer tutors would be willing to tape the test questions for me. Would you be willing to give this a try?"

"I work really hard to spell correctly but I need to use an electronic spellchecker. I always have one with me in class. Is it okay for me to use it on tests?"

"I need extra time to show all that I know on a test. If I could have an extra half hour to finish the social studies test, it would be a better reflection of what I know. I'd be willing to stay through the lunch hour to do this."

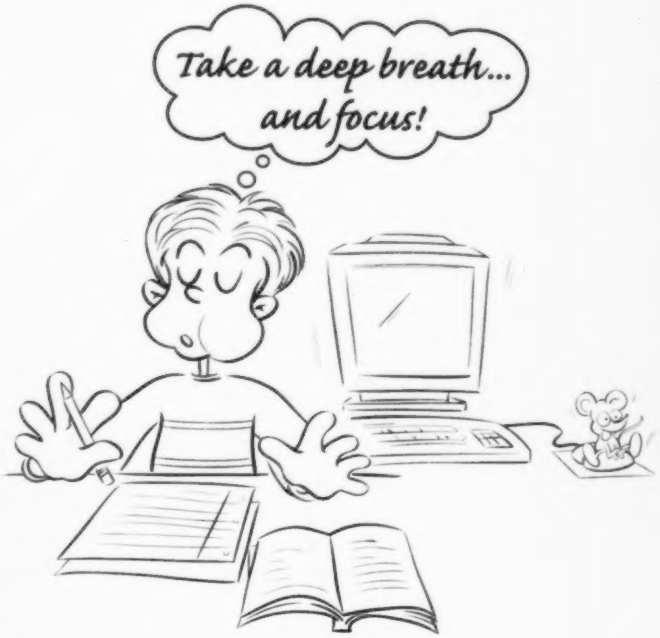

Taped Instructions?





Take responsibility

- Know what works for you and make sure it happens for you.
- Carry your own calculator and spellchecker — don't rely on a teacher to provide them.
- If you need visuals to learn a new concept and your teacher's lesson didn't include them, go to the library and find supporting material to help you understand. (You can bring the material to class and share it with the teacher and other students.)
- Be involved in conferences about your school progress. Be prepared to explain problems and come up with solutions. You are a vital member of your own learning team.
- If you need to do extra work to be ready for learning, such as pre-reading a chapter in your textbook before class, do it. Be prepared to put in the extra time and effort you need to do well.


Take a deep breath... and focus!

Use self-talk[1]

Self-talk is an important thinking tool. It can help you talk positively and think differently about yourself and your abilities.

Statements such as, "I can't do it!" or "It's too hard!," are self-defeating. Instead, find and use positive statements, such as, "I can do it if I try!," "I am a hard worker!" or "I can use my strategies!"

Self-talk can also help you work through learning tasks step-by-step. You gain better control by breaking tasks into manageable and meaningful parts. For instance, when doing a math problem, you might say, "I've read it over. Now I have to figure out what the question is asking."

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[1] From Dana Antaya-Moore and Catherine M. Walker, *Smart Learning: Strategies for Parents, Teachers and Kids* (Edmonton, AB: Smart Learning, 1996), p. 4. Reproduced with permission. For ordering information, fax 780-439-3915.

Set goals

Setting regular goals to improve work habits helps you become a more successful student. Develop a list of positive learning behaviours to choose from when setting goals. Your list could include the following.

In class[2]

- Listen carefully to the teacher.
- Avoid talking to friends during class instruction.
- Practise taking better notes.
- Finish all assignments and make sure they are handed in.
- Participate actively in class discussions.
- Ask the teacher questions when I don't understand.

At home[3]

- Organize myself each night for the next day (file papers, check schedule, calendar and weekly goals).
- Use a calendar for recording due dates and tests.
- Break larger assignments into smaller parts and set deadlines for finishing each part.
- Study in a quiet, distraction-free place.
- Organize my desk, drawers and papers.

Put goals in writing and include a way, such as a chart, to keep track of progress. (See Activity 4, page 87 for a blank goal setting organizer.)

SMART Goals

The best goals are SMART.

They are:

Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Realistic
Time-based.

For example:

I will read one novel by April 28th.

I will type 20 wpm by March 4th.

I will be on time for every class this month.

---

[2] From *The Study Skills Handbook: More than 75 Strategies for Better Learning* by Judith Dodge, p. 38. Published by Scholastic Professional Books, a division of Scholastic Inc. Copyright © 1994 by Judith Dodge. Reprinted by permission.

[3] Ibid.

Date: ____________

Name: ____________

Goal setting organizer

Is your goal
☐ Specific?
☐ Measurable?
☐ Achievable?
☐ Realistic?
☐ Time-based?

Goal

My goal is to …

Get an A on Science presentation.

Rationale

I chose this goal because …

I will be able to go on Spring
field trip to Coast.

Action plan

To reach this goal I will …

1. Begin project 1 month before due date.
2. Use 5+ references.
3. Get Brent to look at 1st draft and make suggestions.
4. Practise presentation on video tape. (x3)

Measurement

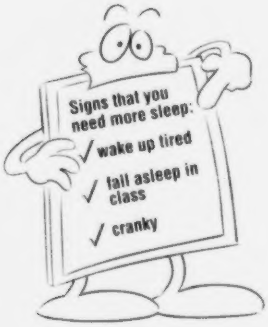
How will I know if I am successful?

My mark!
plus, I'll feel confident.

Evaluation

What would I do differently in the future?

I made it but the timeline was tight.
Next time I'd spend another week and
cancel weekend plans.



Take care of yourself

- Eat a good breakfast and lunch. Your brain will work better if it is fueled by protein. Know your own eating habits and needs. If you need nutritious snacks to keep you going, have them available in your knapsack.
- Get enough sleep the night before the test. Figure out how much sleep your mind needs to be its sharpest.

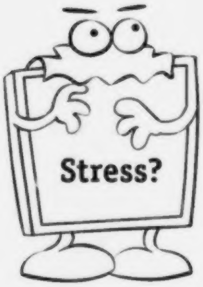
Get into the rhythm

Make the best of your natural rhythms. If you're a morning person, get up early to study. If you think better at night, allow for study time after supper. If you get sleepy after supper, study right after school. It's better to go with the flow than fight your own cycle.

Recognize causes of stress[4]

Some common pitfalls that can lead to stress and frustration:

- enrolling in courses that are not suited to you; for example, if you have difficulty understanding complex math concepts, you might not have the background to do well in physics
- thinking you are doing okay in a course and not realizing you are in trouble until it is too late to solve the problem
- not seeking out the services you need to overcome academic and social difficulties; for example, it might be necessary to take a study skills course or extra tutoring at different points throughout high school and college
- accepting poor advice from friends
- not researching the course demands and the teacher expectations before a course begins
- refusing to accept the fact that you may have to work longer and harder than other students in order to reach your goals
- not having enough time to relax and have fun.



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[4] Adapted from Learning Disabilities Association of Canada, *Together for Success: A Road Map for Post-secondary Students with Learning Disabilities* (Ottawa, ON: Learning Disabilities Association of Canada, 1994), p. 47. Adapted with permission.

Handle stress

- Take a reduced course load. For example, you might take four courses instead of five during the term and take a summer school course.
- Match your strengths to your course selection.
- Begin an assignment right after the teacher gives it to the class.
- Break up assignments into smaller, more manageable parts.
- Ask for help when you need it.
- Look at how you spend your time and make some changes.
- Build in regular ways to relax and have fun.

Learn from your mistakes

Be honest with yourself. When you've made a mistake, think about what you learned from it. Mistakes can be wonderful learning opportunities and can help you know yourself better.

MISTAKES HELP YOU LEARN
ERASER

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CHAPTER 2

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- Make Every Class Count
- Use Tests to Show What You Know
- Present Your Learning
- Get Along with Others
- Get People on Your Side
- Stay Motivated

Make School Work for You

CHAPTER 2

Get Organized

Organizing your life is up to you! It takes time and effort BUT there are payoffs. Organizing your life can help you:

- improve your success in school
- avoid last minute rushes and cram-a-thons
- persuade teachers and parents that you are becoming more mature and independent
- earn more privileges and freedom.

Yes!
Go for it.

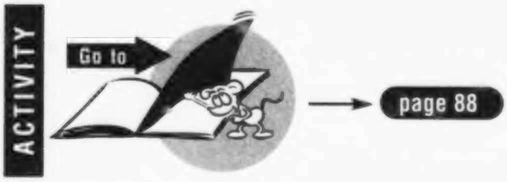
Keys to getting organized and staying that way

- Have a positive mind set.
  - An organized mind is a valuable asset.
  - When you arrive at school, leave your problems at the door and focus on learning.
- Look at the big picture.
  - Try to anticipate your needs and ask for help in advance rather than waiting until it's too late.
- Find ways to relieve (and avoid) stress.
  - Use a daily schedule to organize your time.
  - Set priorities.
  - Do what you have to today. Don't put essential jobs off for later.
  - Make time in each day for fun.
  - Ask for help if you need it.
- Stay on top of things.
  - If you're away, find out what you've missed.
  - Get your mark breakdown for each class ahead of time and use this information to help you plan your study time.
- Develop good time-estimation skills.
  - Learn to accurately estimate how long a task will take.

Getting
organized

Check your limits

It's important to have a realistic picture of your current time commitments. Use the *Know your time limits checklist* on page 88 in the activity section to record how you are spending your time over the week. Getting this information down in black and white will help you plan more realistically and effectively.



Student calendars

Being able to manage your time successfully (without reminders from your parents) puts you well on your way to independence. Student calendars help you schedule your time wisely.[5] When planning your schedule, consider these priorities:

- in-class time
- work hours
- meals
- sleep
- classes outside of school (including sports)
- family activities
- study time (at least one hour per day)
- recreation time.

Remember, it's important to make time for yourself in your daily schedule. Don't schedule every hour of every day — leave room for the unexpected. Be flexible and allow for change — BUT only make changes for a good reason.

Keep a copy of your schedule where you will see it several times each day, like inside the door of your locker. Try out your schedule for at least a week before you make any changes. Make it a habit to stick with your schedule. (See Activity 6, page 89 for a blank daily schedule.)

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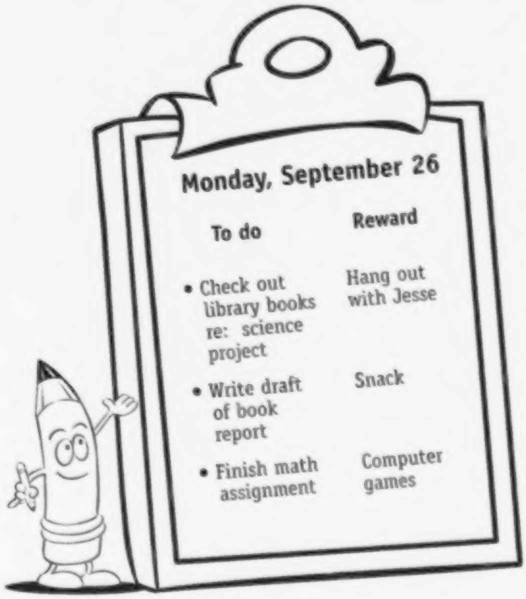
5. From *Learning to Learn: Strengthening Study Skills and Brain Power* by Gloria Frender; IP 190-5, Copyright 1990 by Incentive Publications, Inc., Nashville, TN 37215, pp. 46, 47. Used by permission. This information can only be reproduced on a limited basis for individual use by teachers/students.

Daily schedule

Week of November 19, 2001 to November 25, 2001

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
8:00	Leave for School.	→			P.D. Day	Wake up. shower. breakfast etc.	
9:00	class begins 8:45 am. (Bl.1 Day1)	→ (Day 2)	(Day1)	(Day2)			
10:00	T.A. Class (10 - 10:25)	→			Wake up. shower, etc.	Leave for sister and brother's basketball games	Wake up watch TV shower breakfast, etc.
11:00	10:30 am Block 2 begins	→			↓	↓	
12:00	Lunch is at 11:45 - 12:30	→			Go out for lunch with mom.		Homework or Study
1:00	Period 3 begins at 12:35	→			↓		↓
2:00	↓ 1:50	→					
3:00	3:10 end of school day	→					Leave to go out with grandparents.
4:00	Watch Rosie!	4:00 - 5:00 workout with trainer	Same as Monday	4:00 - 5:00 workout with trainer			↓
5:00	Eat supper	↓	Same as Monday	↓ supper	supper	supper	
6:00	↓ 6:30 Homework	6:30 supper	Same as Monday	Parent-Teacher Interviews	6:30 - 10:00	→	
7:00	↓	7:30 - 8:30 Homework	↓	↓	Bear's and Panda's Basketball	→ (U of A)	↓
8:00		↓			↓	→	
9:00	Freetime! →				↓	→	



Monday, September 26

To do	Reward
• Check out library books re: science project	Hang out with Jesse
• Write draft of book report	Snack
• Finish math assignment	Computer games

To-do lists

Organized people use to-do lists to keep them focused and on top of everything they need to accomplish each day.[6] The following suggestions will make these lists work for you.

- Prepare each evening for the next day.
- Keep the list with you throughout the day.
- Be realistic — there are only 24 hours in a day.
- Cross off items as you do them — this gives you immediate satisfaction and shows your progress.
- Add new items as you think of them.
- Use a coding system to set priorities; for example: A = most important, B = important, C = least important.
- When setting priorities, ask yourself:
  - What must be done by tomorrow?
  - How can I best use my time at this point in the day?
- Put items left over from today's list on tomorrow's list.
- Estimate the amount of time needed to complete each task.
- Give yourself a reward for completing tasks.

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Back planning

Many assignments are handed out a week or more before they are due. Back planning means working backward from the due date and figuring out what tasks you have to complete each day leading up to the due date.[7] This type of planning helps you manage your time and ensures that you get longer assignments done on time. Use a calendar and follow these steps.

- Start with the due date. Count the total number of days you have to complete the project.
- Break the assignment down into smaller tasks and estimate how many days each task will take.
- Working backwards from the due date, record each task in pencil.
- Be prepared to change your timelines if something unexpected happens.
- Think of ways to speed up the process for some tasks. For example, get a taped version of a novel if you can't read it within the deadline.

The sample on the next page shows how one student backplanned for a book report. The middle column shows her thinking and what she considered in each step of the process.

The calendar below shows a simple way to map out a backplan.

Back planning calendar

October

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2 Choose book	3 Read 20 pages	4 Read 20 pages
5 Read 20 pages	6 Read 20 pages	7 Read 20 pages	8 Read 20 pages	9 Read 20 pages	10 Read 20 pages	11 Read 20 pages
12 Read 20 pages	13 Finish book	14 Write draft	15 Write draft	16 Revise draft	17 Revise draft	18 Expert check
19 Expert check	20 Final copy	21	22 Book report DUE	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

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[7] Adapted from Gail McBride, Strathcona Composite High School, Edmonton Public Schools, Edmonton, AB. Adapted with permission.

Back planning

Project: Book report

Project assigned: October 1

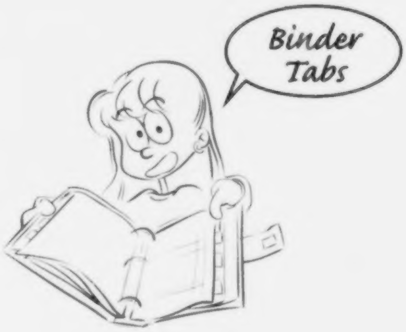
Project due: October 22

Tasks (listed in order from last to first)	Student's Thinking	Time Frame
	With this schedule, I have an extra day in case something unexpected comes up.	Due: Oct. 22
Have good copy checked by expert editor. (mom)	I need to make sure that I let Mom know I will need her help.	1 day Oct. 21 (1 hour)
Produce final copy.	Make sure I can use the computer.	1 day Oct. 20 (3-4 hours)
Have an expert editor check draft. (mom)	It might take Mom a couple of days to go through my report so I need to allow for that in my plan.	2 days Oct. 18-19 (2 hours)
Edit and revise draft.	I might need to spend a couple of days on this - it's a tough job.	2 days Oct. 16-17 (5 hrs / 2.5 hrs per day)
Write draft.	This will probably take me a couple of days to finish. I need to make sure I can use the computer.	2 days Oct. 14-15 (5 pages at 1 hr per page = 2.5 hrs per day)
Read the book.	It would take me three weeks but I don't have that much time so I will need to get it on tape.	1 - ½ weeks Oct. 3-13 (130 pages at 10 pgs per hour = 13 hrs/2 hrs per day)
Choose the book.	I know the book I want to do the report on so I can choose it today.	1 day Oct. 2 (1 hour)

"I keep one binder for each subject. Between classes I go to my locker and trade binders so I always have the one I need."

One Binder Per Subject

"I keep one binder for all of my classes. I use binder tabs to separate my notes and handouts for each class. Once a week, I take my binder home and transfer all the notes and handouts into subject-specific binders."



"I take a clipboard of loose-leaf paper to class. At the end of each day, I transfer all of my notes and handouts into duotangs for each subject."

Binder organization

Save yourself time and stress, and safeguard against lost papers: organize your binder! An organized binder helps you keep track of course outlines and handouts, stay on top of homework and assignments, and study for exams. If you always put things in the same place, you will be able to find them easily when you need them. There is no one best way to organize your binder. It's important to find a binder system that works for you and stick with it.

Keep it together[8]

- Use a three-ring binder whenever possible. It is easier to add to and rearrange papers in a three-ring binder than a spiral notebook.
- Use divider sheets with pockets for handouts that have not been three-hole punched. You can always punch them later.
- Organize the binder in the order of your classes. Use coloured tabs to mark each subject section.
- Divide each subject area into sections with a coloured sheet as a divider. For example, in language arts, you may want separate sections for daily work, quizzes and tests, homework assignments, journal-writing, etc.
- Make sure you have class notes even for those days you were absent. Ask a friend if you can copy his or her notes and then rewrite the notes in your own words.

Don't forget to ...[9]

- Put your name, address and phone number on the inside cover of your binder in case you lose it. Put clear tape over your name label to protect it from water damage.
- Keep a supply of blank loose-leaf paper in the back of each subject area in your binder.
- Store pencils, pens, a ruler, tape, paper clips, etc. in a small plastic zipper bag made for binders.
- Place month-by-month calendar sheets in the front of your binder and write down all due assignments.
- Keep your "To Do" list clipped to the binder's inside cover.

Don't forget!

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[8] From *Teaching for Learning Success: Practical Strategies and Materials for Everyday Use* by Gloria Frender; IP 52-6, Copyright 1994 by Incentive Publications, Inc., Nashville, TN 37215, p. 154. Used by permission. This page can only be reproduced on a limited basis for individual use by teachers/students.

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Homework

Homework has a number of positive spin-offs:[10]

- you practise skills you haven't fully mastered
- you review skills you might otherwise forget
- you add to what you already know about a subject
- you gain new knowledge
- you learn responsibility
- you finish assignments that you haven't completed during class time.

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[10] Adapted from *School Power: Study Skill Strategies for Succeeding in School (Revised and Updated Edition)* (p. 13) by Jeanne Shay Schumm, Ph.D. © 2001. Used with permission from Free Spirit Publishing Inc., Minneapolis, MN; 1-800-735-7323; *www.freespirit.com*. All rights reserved.

Tips for making homework a success

You are responsible for knowing about and completing your homework assignments. Getting all your homework done can be tricky if you aren't organized. Staying on top of homework means that you do the following.

- Understand each assignment. This might mean staying after class for a few minutes to talk with the teacher or another student.
- Schedule time for homework every day. The more consistent that time is from day to day, the more likely you are to stick with it.
- Keep track of due dates for homework assignments. Post a calendar at your study place and use it to keep track of your assignments.
- Put your assignments in order of importance. Do the most pressing assignments first.
- Do your homework in the same place every day. Find a quiet place that's free from distractions.
- Have all the needed supplies on hand, including:
  - pens
  - erasers
  - ruler
  - dictionary
  - file cards
  - post-it notes
  - paper
  - pencils
  - paper clips
  - calculator
  - thesaurus
  - computer discs
  - highlighters
  - a kitchen timer.
- Get the phone number of a classmate you can call if you need help.
- Handle your homework problems. When your homework is not done, be honest about the reason and offer a solution to the problem.

Locker logic

- Keep your locker organized. Keep your morning books on the bottom and your afternoon books on the top.
- Keep your locker free of clutter. Clean it out once a week.
- Colour code your binders, books and materials by subject. This will help you quickly locate everything you need.
- Post your daily schedule and a monthly calendar of assignments on the inside of your locker door.

Planning your future

If you want to go on to post-secondary education, the time to begin planning is NOW. Get started by following these suggestions.

- Talk with your school guidance counsellor about your area of interest.
- If possible, visit the institution you want to attend and talk with someone in your area of interest.
- Find out what services the institution offers students with learning difficulties. For example, do they offer tutoring, counselling, testing accommodations or computer labs?
- Phone or write the institution you wish to attend, and request catalogues and registration information.
- Talk with your school guidance counsellor or your academic advisor and plan your courses to meet the entrance requirements of the institution you want to attend.
- Be prepared to take more time to get all your courses. For example, if you need English 30 and you have difficulty with reading and writing, you might decide to take English 33 to prepare yourself for English 30.
- Once you know what you need to do, set goals for yourself. The big goal is to get accepted into the institution you want to attend, but there will be many small goals along the way.

CHAPTER 3

- Know Yourself
- Get Organized
- Make Every Class Count
- Use Tests to Show What You Know
- Present Your Learning
- Get Along with Others
- Get People on Your Side
- Stay Motivated

Make School Work for You

CHAPTER 3

Make Every Class Count

There are less than 200 school days a year. Successful learners make every day count.

Be there in body and mind

- Attend every class.

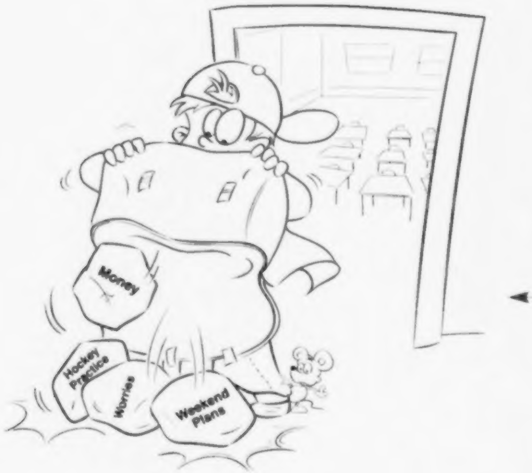
  Often your teacher is covering ideas and information that are not in a textbook. You need to be in class to learn.

- Arrive on time.

  Otherwise, you risk annoying the teacher, missing crucial information or getting too flustered to pay attention. Do whatever it takes, whether it's wearing a watch, setting your alarm earlier or running instead of strolling.

- If for some reason you do arrive late, enter quietly and walk quickly to your seat.

  If the teacher stops talking, quietly say, "Excuse me, sorry I'm late."



- Leave your worries and distractions outside the door. Enter the classroom ready to learn.

- Bring everything you need.

  Have the right tools: erasable pens are great and mechanical pencils save trips to the sharpener.

- Look like you are ready to learn.

  Open your notebook, have your textbook ready and get out your pen right away.

- Sit in a good place.

  If you can choose your own seat, sit in the front of the room in the teacher's line of vision. If you are constantly distracted by another student or cannot see the board, move quietly to another seat.

- Listen carefully.

  Focus on the teacher and other students as they ask questions and contribute to discussions.

- Do NOT chat with other students during class time. Reserve class time for learning.

- Keep a relaxed but quiet position as you listen.

  Monitor yourself to make sure you are not doing things that interfere with other students' learning, such as drumming your fingers or humming under your breath. Ask your study buddy to let you know if he or she notices any annoying habits that might be bothering others.

- If you're unsure about what you should be doing, quietly check out what other students are doing.

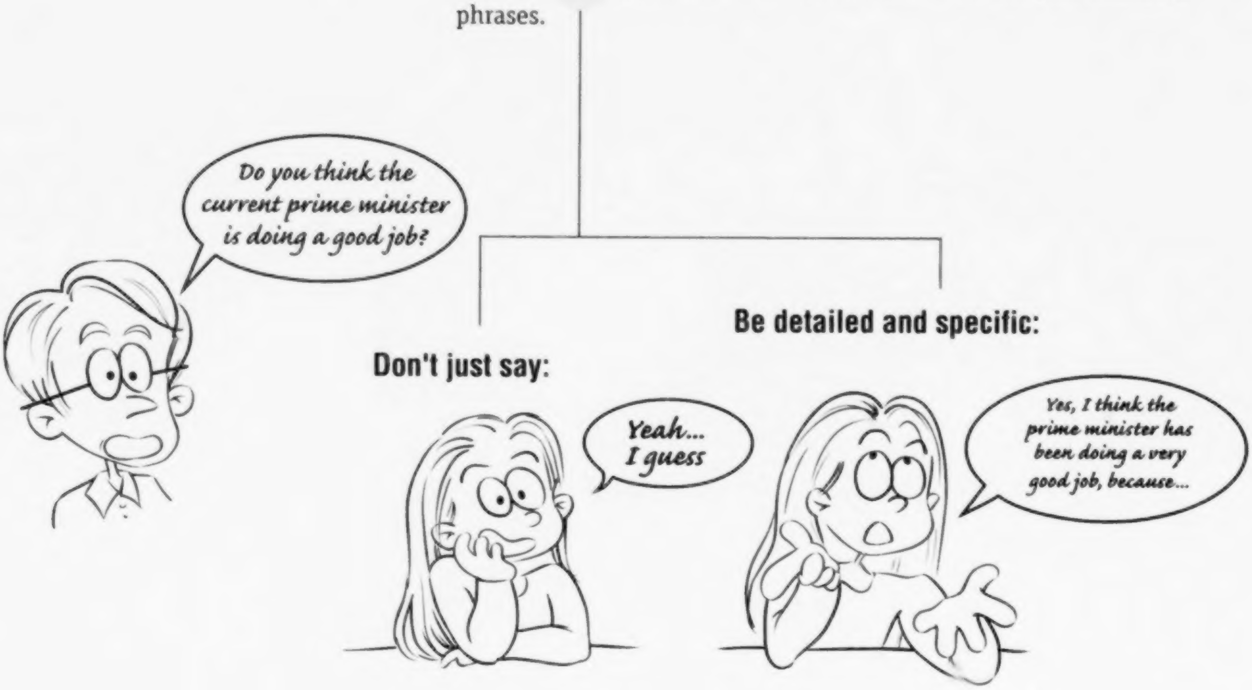
- Find out who is doing really well.

  Note what they do in class and use their example to improve your own in-class performance.

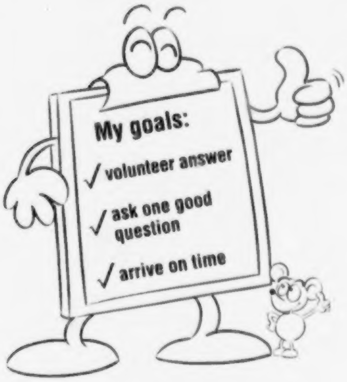
- Participate.

  Offering a good guess if you don't know the answer is almost always better than never raising your hand.

- Try to answer questions in complete sentences, not just mumbled phrases.

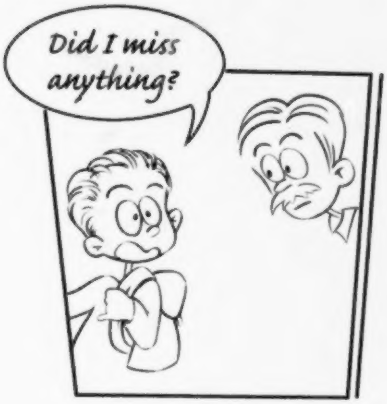

Do you think the current prime minister is doing a good job?
Don't just say:
Yeah... I guess
Be detailed and specific:
Yes, I think the prime minister has been doing a very good job, because...

- Set your own goals for making every class count.

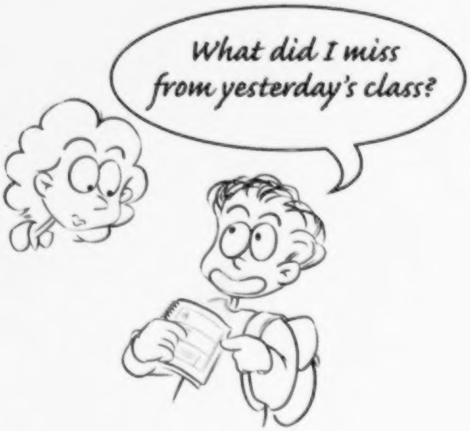

My goals:
✓ volunteer answer
✓ ask one good question
✓ arrive on time

- If you must miss a class:

Never ask:


Did I miss anything?

Instead, ask:


What did I miss from yesterday's class?

Catch yourself

Make a check mark on a separate sheet of paper each time you realize that your mind is wandering. Set a goal to make fewer check marks for each class period.

Concentration begins now

- Set your mind for learning — intend to listen.
- Keep your mind active — take notes.
- Resist distractions — use self-talk to put yourself back on track.
- Involve yourself — think of examples as the speaker talks.
- Think ahead — guess what is coming next.
- Think of questions while listening — this helps you organize thoughts.
- If you get bored — remind yourself of your goals.

Take note of what's important

Here are some reasons why you need to take detailed and accurate class notes.[11]

- Your teacher probably covers information in class that isn't in the textbook. If you don't write it down, you won't have it when you need it.
- Class notes are your best record of what happens during class and your best source of material for test reviews.
- Writing things down reinforces what you hear and helps you remember.
- Taking notes makes you a more active listener.

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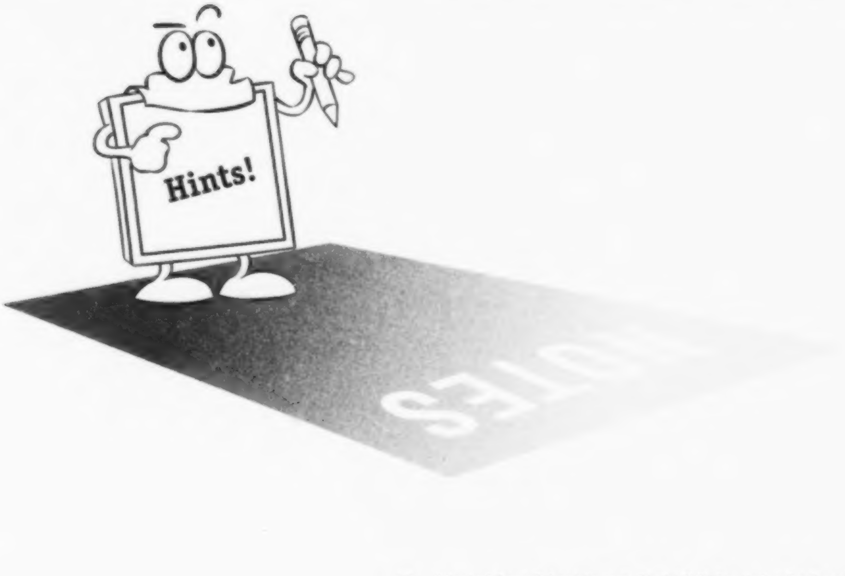
[11] Adapted from *School Power: Study Skill Strategies for Succeeding in School (Revised and Updated Edition)* (p. 24) by Jeanne Shay Schumm, Ph.D. © 2001. Used with permission from Free Spirit Publishing Inc., Minneapolis, MN; 1-800-735-7323; *www.freespirit.com*. All rights reserved.

▶ Note-taking hints[12]

- Write down a date and title for each lesson. (If the teacher doesn't provide a title, make one up.)
- Listen 80 per cent and write 20 per cent of the time.
- You don't need to write down everything the teacher says, but do write down everything the teacher writes on the board as well as any questions the teacher asks.
- Underline, circle or star anything the teacher repeats or emphasizes.
- Write one idea per line and skip lines. Leave wide margins so extra ideas can be added later.
- Use one side of the page only (so you can add details later).
- Write neatly so you can read it later.
- Abbreviate common words and terms that are repeated. For example, "b/c" for because, "&" for and, "govt" for government.
- Put question marks beside any points you don't understand — they can be discussed later with the teacher.
- Listen and take notes to the end. Important summaries and ideas are often given in the last five minutes of class.



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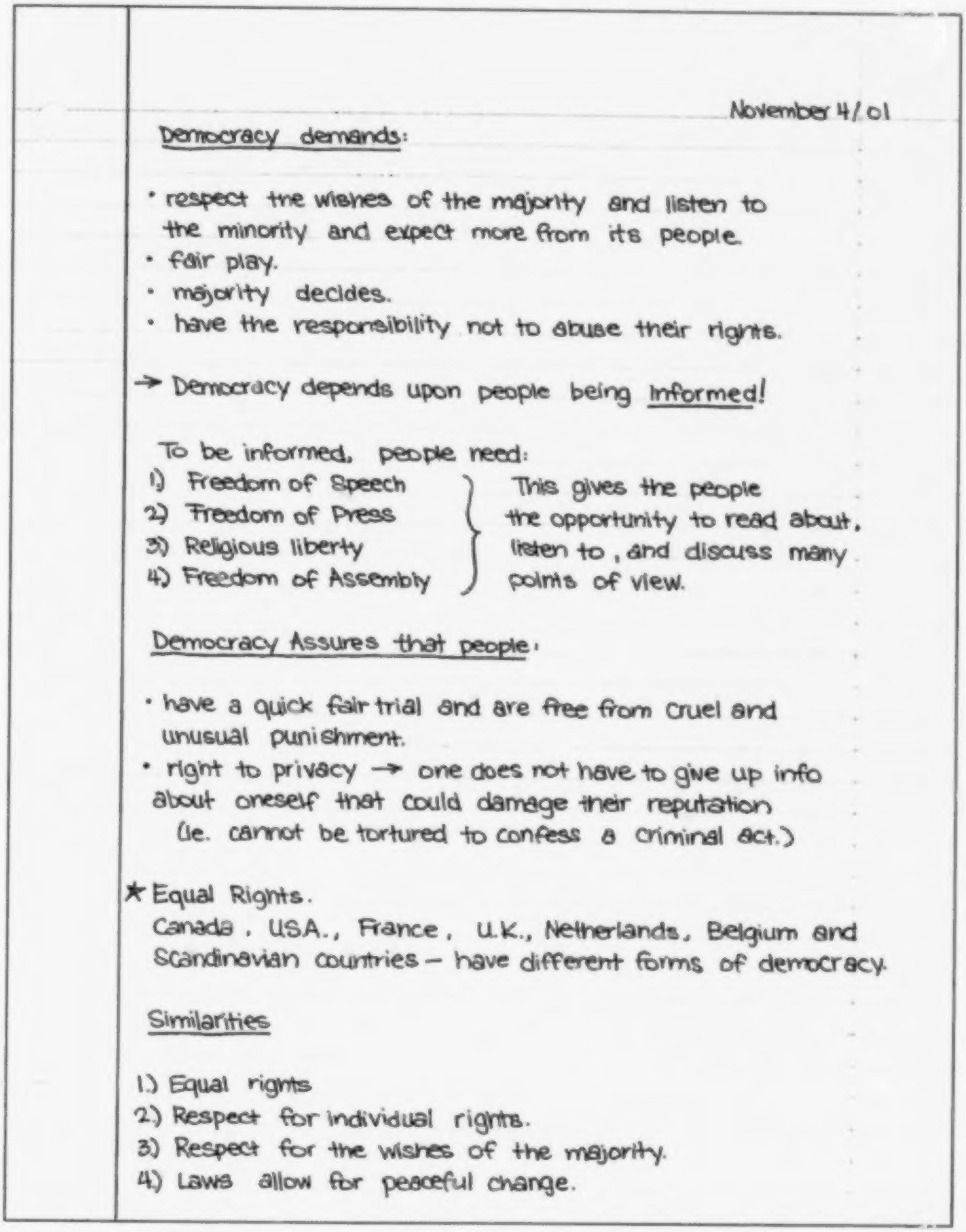
[12] Adapted from *School Power: Study Skill Strategies for Succeeding in School (Revised and Updated Edition)* (p. 25) by Jeanne Shay Schumm, Ph.D. © 2001. Used with permission from Free Spirit Publishing Inc., Minneapolis, MN; 1-800-735-7323; *www.freespirit.com.* All rights reserved. AND *Learning to Learn: Strengthening Study Skills and Brain Power* by Gloria Frender; IP 190-5, Copyright 1990 by Incentive Publications, Inc., Nashville, TN 37215, p. 69. Used by permission. This information can only be reproduced on a limited basis for individual use by teachers/students.

The example below shows a grade 10 student's notes from social studies class. She used point form, numbering and headings to organize her information.



November 4/01

Democracy demands:

- respect the wishes of the majority and listen to the minority and expect more from its people.
- fair play.
- majority decides.
- have the responsibility not to abuse their rights.

→ Democracy depends upon people being informed!

To be informed, people need:
1) Freedom of Speech
2) Freedom of Press
3) Religious liberty
4) Freedom of Assembly

} This gives the people the opportunity to read about, listen to, and discuss many points of view.

Democracy Assures that people:

- have a quick fair trial and are free from cruel and unusual punishment.
- right to privacy → one does not have to give up info about oneself that could damage their reputation (ie. cannot be tortured to confess a criminal act.)

★ Equal Rights.
Canada, USA., France, U.K., Netherlands, Belgium and Scandinavian countries – have different forms of democracy.

Similarities

1.) Equal rights
2) Respect for individual rights.
3) Respect for the wishes of the majority.
4) Laws allow for peaceful change.

Good
to
know!

Class notes are your study guide for upcoming tests. Use these **3 R**s for reviewing class notes — reread, rewrite and reinforce.[13]

❶ — **Reread** the notes aloud. Repeating the information helps you remember it better so you can use it to answer questions.

❷ — **Rewrite** notes neatly and clearly when there is a scribbled word, or an unclear or confusing piece of information.

❸ — **Reinforce** notes. To "reinforce" means to strengthen by adding something. Strengthen class notes by adding important, relevant information from the textbook or handouts. Use a highlighter to spotlight important information. (You know you're over-highlighting when you mark almost everything.) Make sure each section of notes has a title that clearly states the main idea.

Trouble-shoot your note-taking troubles

- Compare your notes with a friend's notes. (Pick a friend you know is a good note-taker.) Add to your notes.[14]
- Read the textbook chapter ahead of time. This will help you be a better listener and note-taker. You'll already know some of what you hear.[14]
- Experiment with different ways of rewriting notes. Try mind maps, graphic organizers or formal outlines. Ask your teacher for advice or check out a recent book on study skills. (See Activity 7, page 90 for blank note-taking formats.)
- Talk to your teacher if you are finding it hard to keep up. Ask the teacher to help you fill in the details. If you're really having difficulty, you might try tape recording lectures but be aware that it takes about four hours to transcribe one hour of tape, so it isn't a practical solution for the long term.[14]

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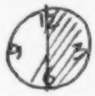
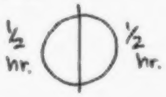
[13] Source: Canter & Associates, (1989), *How to Study and Take Tests*, Los Angeles, CA, p. 29. Used with permission.

[14] Adapted from *School Power: Study Skill Strategies for Succeeding in School (Revised and Updated Edition)* (p. 32) by Jeanne Shay Schumm, Ph.D. © 2001. Used with permission from Free Spirit Publishing Inc., Minneapolis, MN; 1-800-735-7323; *www.freespirit.com*. All rights reserved.

Column note-taking

Subject: Study Secrets Date: 4/25/01

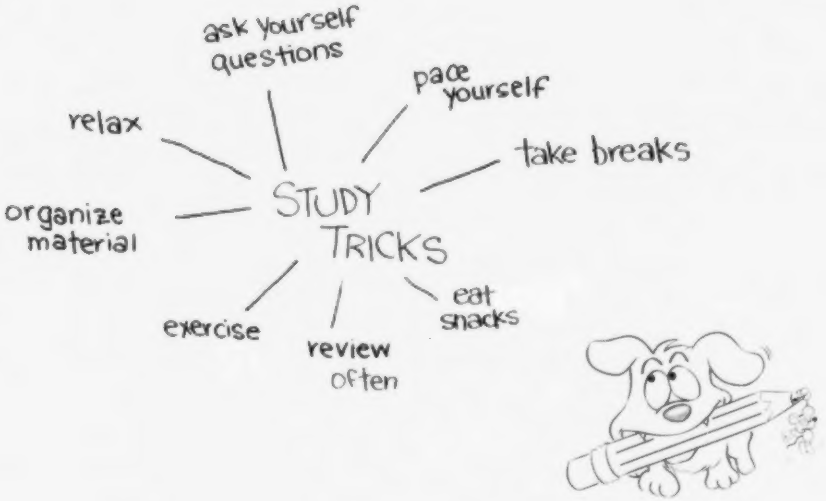
Main ideas	Supporting details
SNACKS #1. #2.	-low blood sugar → poor concentration, poor memory -best: protein, raises level slowly but keeps it high longer; e.g., peanuts, soy, meat. -2nd best: fruit -worst: refined sugar, e.g., candy, pop.
BREAKS 	-every ½ hour -5 min. break -must be complete change from study.
PACING 	- 1 hour per day -divide study periods into equal lengths.

Question and answer note-taking

Subject: Study secrets Date: 4/25/01

Questions	Supporting details
-How does hunger affect memory? - What's the best choice for a smart snack? Why?	-low blood sugar poor concentration, poor memory -best: protein, raise level slowly but keeps it high longer; e.g., peanuts, soy, meat -2nd best: fruit -worst: refined sugar, e.g., candy, pop.
- How long should study breaks be? - How often?	-every ½ hour -5 min. break -must be complete change from study.
-How much time a day will get you the best results? -How should you divide your study periods?	-1 hour per day -divide study periods into equal lengths

Web


STUDY TRICKS
ask yourself questions
pace yourself
take breaks
eat snacks
review often
exercise
organize material
relax

- Keep practising. If you stick with it you'll get better at it.

- Check your own note-taking skills by turning to the *Note-taking inventory* on page 91 in the activity section. Use this information as you set goals for improving your current skills.

ACTIVITY
Go to
page 91

CHAPTER

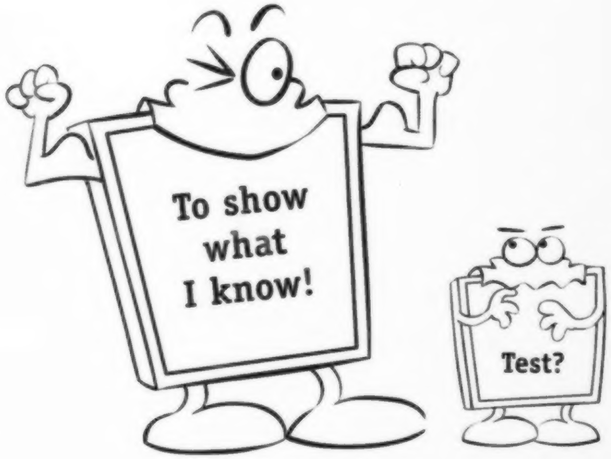
4

- Know Yourself
- Get Organized
- Make Every Class Count
- Use Tests to Show What You Know
- Present Your Learning
- Get Along with Others
- Get People on Your Side
- Stay Motivated

Make School
Work for You

Use Tests to Show What You Know

Tests are opportunities to demonstrate learning. Preparing for tests helps you gain a better understanding of new concepts and skills. Tests are a reality check. They give you, your teachers and your parents information about how you are learning and what you can do on your own.

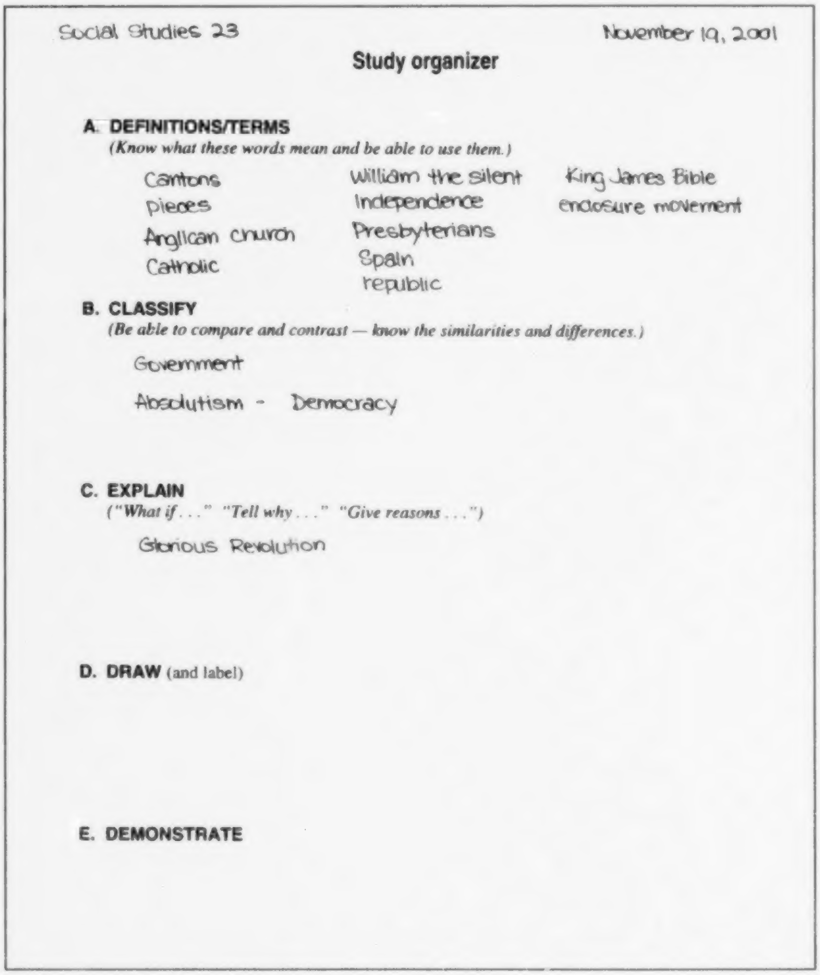

To show what I know!
Test?

Get organized[15]

The first step in getting ready for a test is to ask yourself, "What do I need to know?" and "How can I show what I know?"

Use class notes, textbooks and the teacher's help to outline all the information covered in the unit. Make an organizer that lists the words and concepts covered. Use key words as memory triggers. Don't record complete answers on the sheet — that's too easy and doesn't encourage thinking about the answer.

Use the organizer to talk through new information and make up questions. Put the new information into your own words.
See Activity 9, page 92 for a blank study organizer.



Social Studies 23 November 19, 2001

Study organizer

A. DEFINITIONS/TERMS
(Know what these words mean and be able to use them.)

Cantons
pieces
Anglican church
Catholic
William the silent
Independence
Presbyterians
Spain
republic
King James Bible
enclosure movement

B. CLASSIFY
(Be able to compare and contrast — know the similarities and differences.)

Government

Absolutism - Democracy

C. EXPLAIN
("What if . . ." "Tell why . . ." "Give reasons . . .")

Glorious Revolution

D. DRAW (and label)

E. DEMONSTRATE

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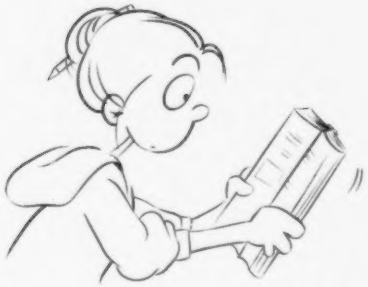
[15] From Dana Antayá-Moore and Catherine M. Walker, *Smart Learning: Strategies for Parents, Teachers and Kids* (Edmonton, AB: Smart Learning, 1996), p. 8. Reproduced with permission. For ordering information, fax 780-439-3915.

Be systematic

- Begin with the most difficult tasks — get them done so they won't hang over your head.
- Pace yourself by alternating assignments that do not require great amounts of concentration with tasks that are more difficult.
- Break large assignments into smaller, organized parts.
- Set reasonable time limits for yourself.
- Give yourself enough time to do a good job. Go for quality.
- It's okay to dislike the assignment or task, but do it anyway.
- Prop reading material at a 45 degree angle and your eyes will be less tired.



Short and often

Don't wait until the last minute to review for a test. Frequent short study periods are more efficient than cramming in one long study session.

Overlearn

Keep studying something even after you know it. Overlearning is especially useful if you get nervous during a test.

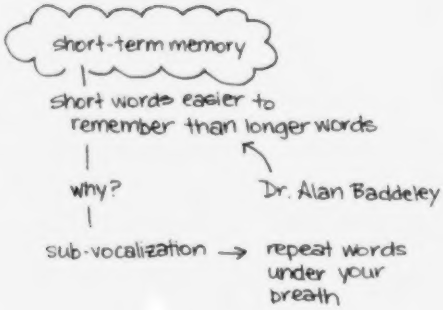
Read aloud

Reading new information aloud helps some learners remember ideas faster and more efficiently.

Highlight information

Highlighting key words is a useful strategy for reviewing and studying factual material.[16] It helps you review new information and organize it so that it's easier to understand and remember.

- Read the paragraph or section of text.
- In your mind, identify the main idea. Use this for your title.
- Choose the key words in each sentence (usually one to five words per sentence).
- Ask yourself: "Does each of these words provide an important piece of information about the main topic?"
- If it's okay to write on the page, highlight the words with your highlighter pen. If it's not okay to highlight on the page — make a photocopy or handwritten copy of the information. An overhead transparency sheet also works. Place it over the text and use an overhead marker to highlight key words. When you are finished, you can wash off the plastic sheet and re-use it.
  (Use your highlighter pen sparingly. You only want to highlight key words — not whole phrases or sentences.) Here is an example.


short-term memory
short words easier to remember than longer words
why?
Dr. Alan Baddeley
sub-vocalization →
repeat words under your breath

The time span on your working **short-term memory** is a bit more tricky. But a scientist called **Dr. Alan Baddeley** carried out some **experiments** to try to put a value on it. The first thing he discovered was that if you're trying to remember words, you'll **remember short words more easily** than long ones. No surprises there, but the good doctor asked himself ***why.*** The answer he came up with was that in trying to remember words, you ***subvocalize,*** which is just the scientific way of saying **you repeat words to yourself under your breath.** (Brennan, 1997, p. 60)

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[16] From Dana Antayá-Moore and Catherine M. Walker, *Smart Learning: Strategies for Parents, Teachers and Kids* (Edmonton, AB: Smart Learning, 1996), p. 6. Reproduced with permission. For ordering information, fax 780-439-3915.

Take a CHANCE — predict test questions[17]

If you can predict the questions your teacher will ask, and if you practise your answers, you will do better on tests. The **CHANCE** strategy can help you predict possible test questions.

C = **Critical ideas**

Focus on the critical ideas — the ones that are most important to understanding the chapter or topic as a whole. Good tests won't focus on picky details.

H = **Higher order questions**

When a question requires more thinking and you have to pull information from more than one sentence or paragraph, make judgments or draw conclusions, the question is considered higher order. Try to think about questions that really stretch your thinking.

A = **Accuracy**

If you can explain in your own words what a textbook chapter says or what your teacher meant during a class lecture, then you are interpreting the materials with accuracy. The questions you predict will also be more accurate.

N = **Number**

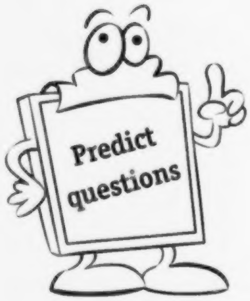
Don't predict just one or two questions. Predict a large number — as many as you can. Cover all the material you are studying.

C = **Clarity**

Confusing questions lead to confusing answers. Are your questions clear? Improve the clarity of your questions by choosing your words carefully.

E = **Examine**

Use your predicted questions to examine yourself. Make up and take a sample test. Check your answers against your textbook and notes.



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10

STUDY TRICKS

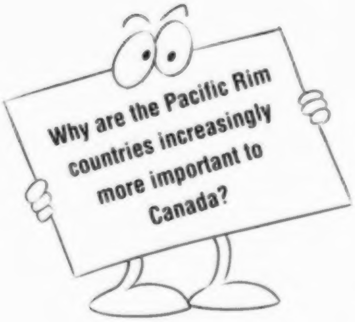
Choose one or two of these smart learning study tricks to get ready for a test.[18]

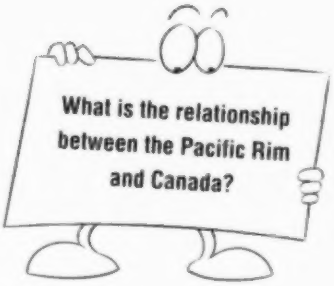
❶ **Highlight:** Read over notes. Highlight key words. (See page 38.)

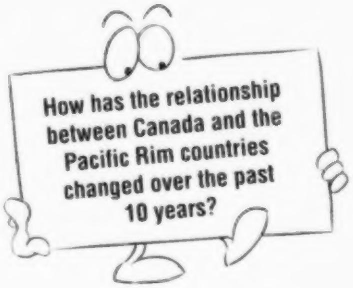
❷ **Web:** Make a web for individual topics. (See page 38.)

❸ **Flash cards:** Make up flash cards for special words and drawings.

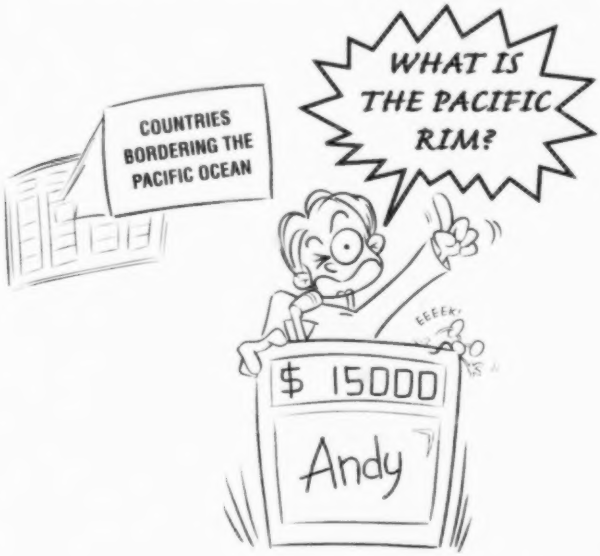
❹ **Questions:** Make up questions for each topic. Ask each of your questions at least three different ways.


Why are the Pacific Rim countries increasingly more important to Canada?


What is the relationship between the Pacific Rim and Canada?


How has the relationship between Canada and the Pacific Rim countries changed over the past 10 years?

❺ **Jeopardy:** Use key words as answers and make up a question for each — like they do on the television game show *Jeopardy*!


WHAT IS THE PACIFIC RIM?
COUNTRIES BORDERING THE PACIFIC OCEAN
EEEEK!
$ 15000
Andy

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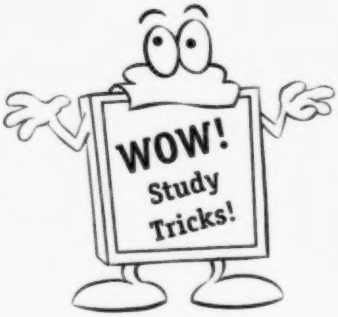
18. From Dana Antayá-Moore and Catherine M. Walker, *Smart Learning: Strategies for Parents, Teachers and Kids* (Edmonton, AB: Smart Learning, 1996), p. 10. Reproduced with permission. For ordering information, fax 780-439-3915.


WOW!
Study
Tricks!

⑥ **Activity sheets:** Review all activity sheets in the unit. Cover up the answers and try them again. Change one activity on the activity sheet and complete it.

⑦ **Cloze:** Make up fill-in-the-blank statements.

⑧ **Drawings:** Practise the drawings from the unit. Label all the parts and explain the diagrams.

⑨ **Be a teacher:** Teach someone else the information.

⑩ **Practice test:** Make up a practice test.

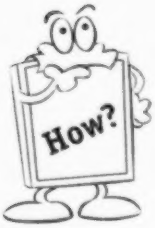
You can study for a math test[19]

Use your textbook to:

- make a list of skills covered in the unit — the table of contents may be helpful
- work through the examples on each page — talk through each step in your head
- find a sample question for each skill — do each question on your own and then check your answers
- do the unit check-up or unit review — the test is often similar.

Use your math notebook to:

- highlight hints and strategies
- look at the errors you've corrected in your daily assignments — look for a pattern
- cover a row of answers with a blank sheet of paper — work through each question, then check your answers
- pick two questions from each page — recopy and do them on your own. Check your answers
- practise by finishing any incomplete questions.



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[19] From Dana Antayà-Moore and Catherine M. Walker, *Smart Learning: Strategies for Parents, Teachers and Kids* (Edmonton, AB: Smart Learning, 1996), p. 11. Reproduced with permission. For ordering information, fax 780-439-3915.

Special accommodations for test taking

If you need some special accommodations to do your best on a test, approach your teacher before the test. Practise what you will say. State the problem simply and clearly, and suggest a solution. For example:

"Can I ask if I don't know some of the words on the test?"

"I may need some additional time to show all that I know on this test. I am willing to stay after class or through the lunch hour."

"I have some difficulty with spelling but I will do my best. I hope spelling errors don't interfere with my mark on this test."

These three accommodations are the most common ones students ask for:

- extra time
- no penalty for misspellings
- assistance reading the directions or test questions.

Other accommodations to consider are:

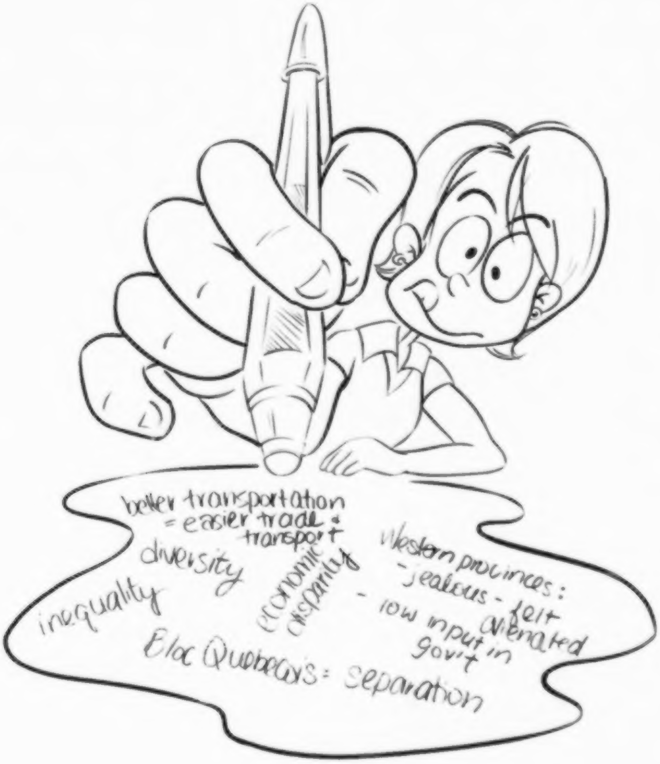
- ask the teacher to go over the directions for each part of the test to ensure that you understand what you are being asked to do
- ask the teacher to provide audiotaped test questions
- use electronic spellcheckers or dictionaries
- use word processors for written tests
- ask the teacher to give a sample answer, especially on math tests, to help you see what you need to do
- use an audiotape to record your answer or give an answer verbally if your written answer isn't clear and does not show your knowledge
- ask the teacher to give the test orally.

Before the test[20]

- Get a good night's sleep before an important test.
- Eat a healthy breakfast.
- Before leaving home, make sure you have everything you need for the test. This could include: pencils, eraser, erasable ball-point pen, calculator and study notes.
- On the way to school, use positive self-talk, such as, "I'm ready, I'll do my best."
- Arrive early and be ready to show all you know.

Splashdown

Just before starting the test, do a "splashdown" on the back of the test paper.[21] Take two minutes to jot down key words, memory triggers, dates, names, formulas and special information you can use in answering test questions.


better transportation
= easier trade &
transport
diversity
economic disparity
Western provinces:
- jealous - felt alienated
- low input in gov't
inequality
Bloc Quebecois = separation

---

[20] Adapted from *School Power: Study Skill Strategies for Succeeding in School (Revised and Updated Edition)* (p. 90) by Jeanne Shay Schumm, Ph.D. © 2001. Used with permission from Free Spirit Publishing Inc., Minneapolis, MN; 1-800-735-7323; *www.freespirit.com*. All rights reserved.

[21] Ibid., p. 91.

Be test-wise

- Read all directions TWICE.
- Highlight key words.
- Pay special attention to words in bold or italics.
- Read all the important clues in charts, pictures, graphs and maps.
- When you are given information for more than one question, reread the information before answering each question.
- If there is a word that you can't read or don't understand, read around it and ask, "What word would make the most sense here?"
- Mark any question you find difficult, skip it and come back to it at the end of the test.
- Often, test questions have more than one step and ask you to consider a number of pieces of information. On scrap paper, jot down notes for each step of the problem. Use this information to find your answer.
- Talk through your plan in your head. "First I have to find out … then I take that number and … to find out … I need to …"
- Use intelligent guessing strategies. Do not leave any questions unanswered.
- Keep working. If you finish early, read through each question and answer to make sure you have a complete answer.

Good to know!

Be a high SCORER[22]

Use this strategy to remind yourself what to do during a test.

S = **Schedule your time.**

Look over the whole test. Decide how much time you have for each question. Use all the time given.

C = **Clue words give you help.**

Sometimes one question has part of an answer to another question.

O = **Omit difficult questions.**

Stay calm. Mark questions you don't know with a star (*). Keep going and come back to them when you have finished the other questions. Read difficult questions through three times. Try not to leave any blanks. If you don't know the answer, make a best guess.

R = **Read directions carefully.**

Highlight key direction words.

E = **Estimate your answers.**

Make a guess and ask yourself, "Does this make sense?" Check out the value of the question. If it is worth three points make sure you have three points in your answer.

R = **Review your work.**

Read over your answers three times. Ask, "Is this what I want to say? Does it make sense? Can someone else read my answers?"

---

[22] Adapted from Deborah A. Murphy et al., *Exceptions: A Handbook of Inclusion Activities* (Longmont, CO: Sopris West, 1988–1994), pp. 109–110. Reprinted with permission from Sopris West Educational Services, *Exceptions* by CSDC with Deborah A. Murphy et al., copyright 1994.

The anxiety factor[23]

A little anxiety can be an advantage — it can focus energy and sharpen thinking. However, too much anxiety can be counterproductive. The best defence is to be prepared. The more prepared for a test you are, the less anxious you will feel.

Take a brief relaxation break if you start to get anxious during a test. Practise these three simple steps:

1. close your eyes
2. breathe deeply and slowly
3. think about relaxing your hands.

Ignore other students who finish the test before you. It's a myth that top students finish first. If you finish a test early, use the time to check your answers and read over directions.

Multiple-choice tests[24]

A multiple-choice item consists of two parts — a question or incomplete statement (called the stem) followed by several choices. Your job is to choose the correct response from the choices. All incorrect choices are called "distractors." Distractors are used to make you think a little harder.

stem →	Multiple choice tests are designed to:
correct answer →	a. make you think
distractors	b. make your life more difficult c. amuse your teacher d. save paper.

- Read all directions carefully. Although most tests ask you to choose one best answer, some tests require that you choose more than one answer.
- Read the question or statement and try to answer or complete it before looking at the possible answers. Then, look over the answers and see if your answer is there. If so, mark it and move to the next question.

---

[23] Adapted from *School Power: Study Skill Strategies for Succeeding in School (Revised and Updated Edition)* (p. 91) by Jeanne Shay Schumm, Ph.D. © 2001. Used with permission from Free Spirit Publishing Inc., Minneapolis, MN; 1-800-735-7323; *www.freespirit.com.* All rights reserved.

[24] Source: Canter & Associates, (1989). *How to Study and Take Tests,* Los Angeles, CA, pp. 55, 56. Used with permission. AND Adapted from *School Power: Study Skill Strategies for Succeeding in School (Revised and Updated Edition)* (p. 94) by Jeanne Shay Schumm, Ph.D. © 2001. Used with permission from Free Spirit Publishing Inc., Minneapolis, MN; 1-800-735-7323; *www.freespirit.com.* All rights reserved.

- If you don't know the answer, check out each possibility by reading the beginning of the question with each of the potential answers. This will give you a better idea of which response sounds right.
- Read ALL choices before picking an answer.
- Look for answers that are obviously wrong.
- If you're unsure of the correct answer, cross out any distracters that are definitely wrong. Choose the best answer from the remaining choices.
- When in doubt, guess (unless there is a penalty for guessing).
- Use information included in statements or questions to help you answer other questions. This may be especially helpful when you have completed the entire test and are going back to review your answers.

True-false tests[25]

Read the statement slowly and carefully, word by word. If any part of the statement is false, the entire statement is false.

Pay close attention to qualifying words, such as ***all***, ***most***, ***never***, ***usually*** and ***always***.

Yes!
You can
do it!

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[25] Source: Canter & Associates, (1989), *How to Study and Take Tests*, Los Angeles, CA, p. 53. Used with permission.

What to do when the test comes back[26]

When the teacher hands back the test, use it to analyze errors. Try to figure out what happened. Were the directions misunderstood? Were the mistakes a result of carelessness?

Find out the right answer for each question missed. Write them on the test paper and turn it into a study tool for next time. Keep a file of old tests to help predict the kinds of questions you might see on later tests.

Be sure to notice what you did right. Give yourself credit for the study tricks that paid off and resolve to keep up the good work.

HANG ON
NEXT PAGE

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CHAPTER

5

Make School
Work for You

- Know Yourself
- Get Organized
- Make Every Class Count
- Use Tests to Show What You Know
- Present Your Learning
- Get Along with Others
- Get People on Your Side
- Stay Motivated

Present Your Learning

Assignments are a fact of life in junior and senior high school. They come in all forms — essays, presentations, math calculations and so on. Each teacher has certain expectations and deadlines. You may not always like the assignments you are given, but it is important to do your best and complete all assignments.

Present yourself!

Writing paragraphs

Knowing how to write a paragraph is an important skill for any writing assignment, including essays. Use the following tips to make paragraph writing easier.[27]

- Make sure that all of the sentences are on the same topic. Arrange them in an order that makes sense.
- Avoid one-sentence paragraphs. Each paragraph should be long enough to develop its topic.
- Does the paragraph go on and on? Maybe you should break it up into two (or more) paragraphs. You might be trying to say too much or wandering off topic.
- If you're writing a paragraph that explains something, ask yourself, "What would I learn if I were reading this for the first time?"
- If you're writing a descriptive paragraph, ask yourself, "What would I see in my mind if I were reading this for the first time?"

► Paragraph planners

Paragraph planners are frameworks for creating effective paragraphs.[28] To begin, brainstorm ideas and record key words for each idea in a column. Next, write your opening sentence and tell the reader what you are going to say. Write each detail sentence and expand your ideas with a follow-up sentence. In your conclusion, summarize your paragraph and give the reader something additional to think about. Then, edit and revise. Edit and revise again. Ask someone else to read the paragraph and make suggestions. Editing and revision are the keys to good writing.

See the following page for an example of a completed paragraph planner. See Activity 10, page 93 for a blank paragraph planner.

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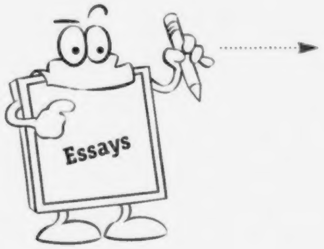
[27] Adapted from *School Power: Study Skill Strategies for Succeeding in School (Revised and Updated Edition)* (p. 72) by Jeanne Shay Schumm, Ph.D. © 2001. Used with permission from Free Spirit Publishing Inc., Minneapolis, MN; 1-800-735-7323; *www.freespirit.com*. All rights reserved.

[28] From Edmonton Public Schools, *Thinking Tools for Kids: Practical Organizers* (Edmonton, AB: Edmonton Public Schools, Resource Development Services, 1999), p. 95. Reproduced with permission.

Paragraph planner

Topic: Study secrets

Key words	
snacks	**Introductory sentence** (Tell what you are going to write about and grab your reader's interest.) If you're hungry when you are studying, listen to your body. It's telling you something important.
blood sugar	**First** detail sentence Feeling hungry means your blood sugar has dropped.
- memory - concentration	Follow-up sentence (more information about first detail) Low blood sugar means poor concentration and your memory doesn't work as well.
protein example	**Second** detail sentence Your best choice for a snack is a protein snack like peanuts or a tuna sandwich.
- slower - lasts longer	Follow-up sentence (more information about second detail) Protein raises your blood sugar slower but it lasts a longer time when it is raised.
fruits	**Third** detail sentence Fruits are your second best choice.
not refined sugar	Follow-up sentence (more information about third detail) Refined sugar like candy or pop raises your blood sugar faster but it crashes soon after.
Enjoy	**Closing sentence** (Say your opening sentence in a different way.) When you are studying, keep your brain well fed – enjoy a tasty protein snack.



Writing essays

You're having a conversation with a friend. You state your opinion on a topic and then back it up with facts and information. Hey, you've just given an oral essay![29]

Many of the assignments you do in high school will be essays. Whether it's a single paragraph or several pages, an essay expresses an idea, gives and supports an opinion or develops a theme. If you have a learning difficulty, written assignments, such as essays, can be challenging. You need a system to help you complete these assignments successfully. Use these suggestions when writing an essay.[29]

- First, say what you're going to say (what your essay is about).
- Next, say it (the body of your essay).
  - Stick to the topic. Even a long, neat paper won't make the grade if it doesn't stay on track.
  - Make your organization obvious. Use clue words like "first," "next," "on the other hand," "furthermore," "also," "in conclusion," and so on.
  - Say what you mean and mean what you say. Spell out all your ideas clearly — don't expect your teacher to read your mind.

A good essay is a planned essay. A linear outline helps you organize your information and present your ideas in a clear and straightforward manner. Use this structured outline to help you organize your ideas, guide your research and get your information down on paper. See Activity 11, page 94 for a blank linear outline.

A word about computers

Computer word processing has potential for helping less-able writers dramatically improve the quality and quantity of their writing. Word processing makes it easier to add text, delete text or move text around. A good program can help you identify and correct errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation. It can also help you produce legible, organized pieces of writing.

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29. Adapted from *School Power: Study Skill Strategies for Succeeding in School (Revised and Updated Edition)* (p. 74) by Jeanne Shay Schumm, Ph.D. © 2001. Used with permission from Free Spirit Publishing Inc., Minneapolis, MN; 1-800-735-7323; *www.freespirit.com.* All rights reserved.

Subject/Title

Study skills

Introduction

Why not use latest research to improve study skills?

Subtopics	1. Time	2. Breaks	3. Mistakes
Supporting Information	- 1hr. per day.	- helps overall retention.	- correct them
	- divide equal periods.	- ½ hour concentration.	- learn from them
		- 5 min. break	- help you remember
		- no longer, no shorter	
		- need complete change	

Summary

Using scientific research can help you make better marks.

References

"Memory" by Herbie Brennan

However, computers don't take the place of thinking. You still need to decide what to write and how to say what you want to say. Computers don't catch errors in word substitutions. For example, if you type "form" for "from" or "you" for "your," the computer's spellcheck feature will not catch it. You need to depend on human proofreaders rather than relying solely on technology. Planning and proofreading skills are essential for successful writing, whether you use a word processor or not.

Good to know!

Projects and presentations

Projects and presentations are excellent ways to demonstrate your knowledge, extend your understanding or create a new context for the skills and concepts you are learning. They usually require less formal writing and capitalize on your creative thinking. But, they also require organization and planning.

▶ Planning for projects and presentations

In setting out to do a project or presentation, plan your time. (Use the back planning strategy on page 18 to see how.) Take time to list the resources, both human and material, that you need to complete the assignment. Consider the time it will take to find and use those resources when you are planning your timelines.

▶ Quality control

Quality control is essential. This means deciding what's important — what needs to be in the project, and what is extra and can be left out. It also means looking at your project or presentation and deciding how to improve it.

▶ What's your purpose?

A good project or presentation needs a clearly identified purpose. Focus on a question and use your project or presentation to answer that question. It's important to think about what you want your audience to do, think or say after your presentation. To do this, you need to become an expert on your topic.

Become an expert

▶ Expert status

Credibility, or your expert status, is key to successful projects and presentations. You not only need to know your topic well in your own mind, but you need to present yourself and your work in such a way that you come across as an expert. First impressions count, and your expert status will be judged by the quality of your written work as well as how you present yourself. Make sure your written work is free of spelling errors, and that, when speaking about your topic, you pronounce key words correctly. Your physical appearance; for example, how you dress on that day, can help or hinder your expert status.

A project or presentation with careless errors reduces your expert status. It gives people the impression that you don't really care about your topic. And if you don't care, why should they?

▶ Projects and presentations as alternative assignments

Projects and presentations can be alternatives for written assignments. Many teachers are open to the idea of students demonstrating or extending their learning in ways other than essays or research papers. If this alternative sounds appealing to you, you need to be your own advocate. Don't assume that your teacher will know that an alternative assignment would be best for you. You may need to be the one to approach the teacher. To present a convincing case to the teacher:

- have a proposal in mind before you approach the teacher
- choose an alternative that will use your strengths; for example, if you are a good artist, propose a project that uses illustrations
- be prepared to follow through with your proposal.

Asking for an alternative assignment means taking a risk. The better prepared you are, the easier it will be. Try rehearsing your request with a parent or friend. This will give you a chance to make sure you are clear about what you want and that you have covered all the bases.

Oral presentations

Whether an oral presentation stands alone or accompanies a project, public speaking can be challenging for anyone. The CHECK strategy is one way to prepare for an oral presentation.[30]

- **C** Check the audience — is everyone ready to listen?
- **H** Have eye contact with the audience.
- **E** Express — use your voice and body language to communicate.
- **C** Clear — make sure you speak so that everyone can understand your words.
- **K** Keen to be heard — show you're interested in what you are saying. Be enthusiastic.

Parents, siblings or friends can be a friendly and supportive audience for practising oral reports. Ask them to use the CHECK strategy to provide feedback on what you are doing well and what you need to improve.

Try practising your presentation in front of a mirror. This will help you see what your audience will see. You can also try recording your presentation on audio or videotape. Listen and/or watch the recording to see if you are going too fast, if you are mumbling or if you sound enthusiastic enough. Look and listen for ways to improve your presentation.

A word about plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the work of someone else and leaving the reader or listener with the impression that it's your own original work. It is a serious offence. The best way to avoid plagiarism is to acknowledge or reference the ideas of others whenever you use them. This applies to ideas taken from books and magazines, as well as those taken off the Internet or from interviews. Make sure the sources you use for each assignment are included in a bibliography at the end. This not only shows that you have completed some research, but allows the reader to find out more about the topic by going to the sources you used.

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[30] From Robert Mulcahy et al., *SPELT: A Strategies Program for Effective Learning and Thinking: A Teachers' Manual* (Edmonton, AB: University of Alberta, 1987), pp. 128, 131. Reproduced with permission.

CHAPTER 6

Make School Work for You

- Know Yourself
- Get Organized
- Make Every Class Count
- Use Tests to Show What You Know
- Present Your Learning
- Get Along with Others
- Get People on Your Side
- Stay Motivated

CHAPTER 6

Get Along with Others

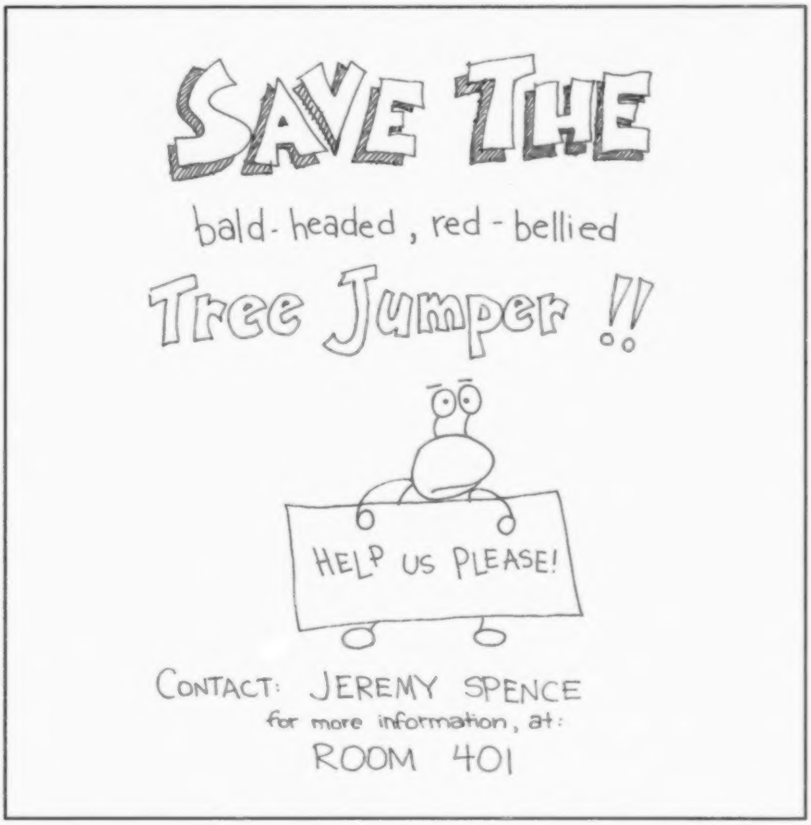
A big part of school life is getting along with others. You spend many hours in the classroom and it's important to feel comfortable and connected with the other students. Larger classes, families moving around more and the growing number of course offerings, mean that many of the faces in each class may be unfamiliar to you. It takes effort to be comfortable and confident in this kind of ever-changing environment.

Comfortable
& connected

Join in

One of the best ways to feel connected at school is to participate in at least one extracurricular activity. This could be a sport, a club or a special project team. Playing sports or participating in a favourite activity with other students is an opportunity to get to know a number of students well.

Being able to find a friendly and familiar face in the crowd will go a long way toward helping you feel more connected and comfortable in school. Extracurricular activities also give you something to look forward to, and a place to contribute your skills and expertise. Try out a number of different activities. You never know what new interests and new friends you may find.


SAVE THE
bald-headed, red-bellied
Tree Jumper !!
HELP US PLEASE!
CONTACT: JEREMY SPENCE
for more information, at:
ROOM 401

Be prepared

Arrive on time and bring the textbooks and supplies you need. If you rush in late or have to ask other students for a pen, you're setting yourself up for poor relationships with students sitting nearby.

Small talk

As you walk in and out of the classroom, say "Hello" to the students sitting around you. People want to be acknowledged. Make an effort to answer questions with a sentence or two, not just "yes" or "no."

If you start a conversation, look for clues that other people are interested. Asking questions is a good way to start a conversation with people you don't know very well. Find common ground, such as an interest in sports or a movie you've both seen.

Limit small talk to the few minutes before and after the bell. Chatting during class time is distracting and can draw negative attention from both the teacher and other students.

Body language

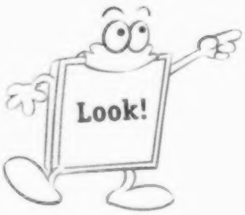
Be conscious of your body language. Don't slouch in your seat. This could give the message that you're not interested in anything that is going on, including other people. Sit up straight. Take off hats or hoods that hide your face. Make eye contact with other people. Don't fidget with your pen or tap your foot. Be aware of habits that are irritating to others.

Show that you are listening

Class participation does not only mean talking. It also means being an active listener. Show that you are listening when other students ask questions or give ideas. Nod your head, turn to the speaker — look interested.

Contribute to discussion

Set a goal for yourself to ask at least one good question, or volunteer two or three answers per class.



Look for clues

Keep your eye on what other students are doing in class. If you've missed the teacher's directions, see what textbooks the other students have on their desks. Are they starting to read or write? Use these clues to stay on task.

Ask if you don't know

Don't be afraid to ask other students for help. A whispered, "What page are we on?" can provide the information you need to get back on track. This will let other students know they can ask you for help when they need it.

Cooperative learning

There are many reasons teachers ask students to work with partners. Cooperative learning improves academic achievement because it gives students opportunities to talk about new ideas and practise using new information and skills.

The most common difficulty adults have at work is not a lack of technical skills but a lack of people skills. More people are fired or passed over for promotions because they have problems getting along with others, than for any other single reason. Use partner work in the classroom as an opportunity to sharpen your people skills. Most partner work is short-term and you should be able to work with any person for a short time.

▶ Finding partners in the classroom

Finding your own partners can be stressful. Be willing to work with a variety of other people and move outside the circle of people you already know. Make it a goal to have a variety of partners over the school year.

If you ask someone to be a partner and they brush you off, take a deep breath and find someone else. Try not to do the same thing when someone asks to be your partner.

If finding partners feels awkward to you, you can be sure other students feel just as awkward. Make a conscious effort to help other people feel comfortable and you'll end up feeling more comfortable yourself. If you are the last two matched, make light of the situation by saying something like, "They saved the best for the last, I guess."

If it seems as if a particular partner doesn't want to work with you, try to put those feelings aside and get on with the work at hand. Chances are, the negativity doesn't have anything to do with you. The best thing you can do is be business-like and friendly. Use this as an opportunity to show that you are a good partner to work with by remaining friendly and staying on task.

If you haven't found a partner by the time the activity begins, alert the teacher to the situation by saying something like, "Is there someone who needs a partner?" or "Should I make a group of three? I don't think we have an even number of people for partners."

► Starting off on friendly ground

Show that you're ready to work together by moving closer to your partners so you can hear each other and share materials.

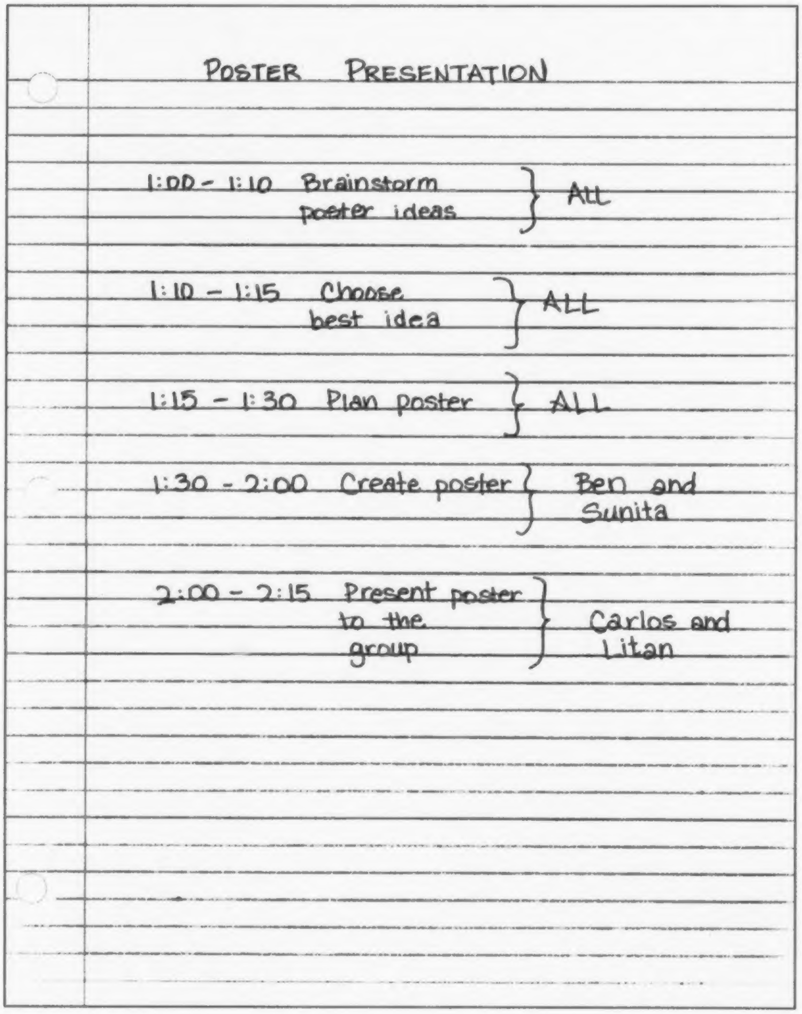
When you join your new partners, acknowledge them right away by saying something like, "Hi Jay, glad to be working with you today." If there is a chance your partners don't remember your name, make it easy by offering a simple reminder, such as, "Hi, I'm CJ. I don't think we've worked together before."

If you end up working with people you don't like, it is especially important to be polite and make those people feel welcome. They should never know they were not your first choice. Who knows, just going through the motions of acting like everything is okay may turn your mind around. You just might end up enjoying the whole experience.

Get the directions right

Listen carefully to directions so you understand what has to be done. Clarify the directions with your partners by saying something like, "So, as I understand it, we need to ..." Ask for clarification. Ask, "Does this sound right to you?" or "Is that how you understand this?"

Be sure you understand how long you have to do the job. Jot down the finishing time and figure out how much time you can spend on each task. Make a rough plan of who will do what. Make sure your partners can see what you've written so it can be a reference for everyone.



POSTER PRESENTATION

1:00 - 1:10	Brainstorm poster ideas	All
1:10 - 1:15	Choose best idea	ALL
1:15 - 1:30	Plan poster	ALL
1:30 - 2:00	Create poster	Ben and Sunita
2:00 - 2:15	Present poster to the group	Carlos and Litan

Focus

A whole room of students talking with one another can be noisy and distracting. Sit close to your partners and maintain eye contact. Use a quiet voice that your partners can hear but other students cannot. Resist the urge to chat, listen in on other conversations or visit with friends in another part of the room. Keep your focus on the job.

Do time checks aloud by saying something like, "Okay, we have five minutes left to get 10 more ideas." Save your small talk until the job is finished.

If you don't like the assigned task, keep your opinion to yourself and try to finish the job as quickly as possible. If your partners complain about the assignment, acknowledge their feelings but let them know you're determined to finish the job. You could say something like, "The assignment is different but let's just get on with it" or "I'm not crazy about this either but we should be able to get it done pretty fast."

Do your share of the work

Break the job into smaller tasks. For example, you might start the assignment by saying something like, "How about I do two and you do two? You pick the first one."

If your partners are doing all the work, speak up and let them know that you are willing to do your part. Make your concern clear by saying something like, "You're doing a lot of the work here, I better do my part. I'll do the next section."

Don't wait for someone to tell you what to do. Volunteer ideas and information — it's important to pull your own weight in partner work. Set a goal to contribute a minimum number of ideas each time you work with others.

If there is a partner role you are reluctant to do, be honest with your partners. You might say something like, "I'd rather not be the recorder, my writing can be a challenge for others to read." Don't be surprised if your partners aren't any more comfortable in the role than you are — you may not be alone in the tasks you find difficult or unpleasant. If there is a job that no one wants, offer to toss a coin for a quick settlement. It's not a good idea to refuse to do a job, your partners should be able to count on you.

If there is something your partners can do to support you, let them know. For example, you might practise reading a presentation aloud and have your partners help you with any difficult pronunciations. Look for ways to support your partners when they present. It might be helpful to hold up a poster while they talk or follow along so you can prompt them if they miss anything.

Be a good listener

Keep small talk to a minimum, especially when the teacher is giving directions or when other groups are presenting information.

Take turns talking. Try not to interrupt your partners. Ask questions to make sure you've understood what others have said. If ideas are unclear, encourage your partners to elaborate by saying something like, "Tell me more about that" or "That's interesting, could you give me an example of that?"

Be encouraging

Acknowledge your partner's ideas with comments, such as, "That's a good idea" or "Mmm, that's true." Show you are listening by nodding your head and keeping eye contact. Be conscious of your body language and try not to fidget or play with objects; this can be distracting to others.

If you think an idea is stupid, keep your opinion to yourself. If appropriate, you could make a neutral comment, such as, "I wouldn't have thought of that" or "That's an interesting way of looking at it." If it's a factual error that gets in the way of completing your job, be tactful and say something like, "This just doesn't sound right, let's reconsider ..."

If partners criticize your ideas, be friendly but let them know they are out of line by saying something like, "I need a little more encouragement here. Let's just get the ideas down, even if they are not perfect. We can sort them out later."

Say thanks

When you're finished, let your partners know you appreciate their work by saying something like, "Thanks, you had lots of good ideas" or "Good to work with you."

Finding a partner for projects

Finding partners for long-term projects is a bit trickier. Some good friends work well together; some don't. Make a good choice because you usually have to stick with the same partners for the duration of the project.

If you have difficulty finding partners, talk with your teacher after class. The teacher will help you find a partner or have you join another group.

Use all the cooperative learning strategies you have practised in class to develop working relationships with your partners. Let them know that you are serious about projects by sharing your goals. For example, you might say, "I want to earn at least a B on this project."

Make a written plan listing who will do what and by when, so everyone clearly understands what has to be done.

When there are problems

If you and your partner have difficulties you cannot resolve (and the project is part of your term mark) you have to take action. Let your partner know your concerns and suggest you both go and speak with your teacher. At this point, your partner might be more willing to work out the problem. Focus on solutions for getting the project done, not on relationships. Avoid blaming. Be willing to start over again. What you learn from working with partners may be just as important as what you are learning in your subject area.

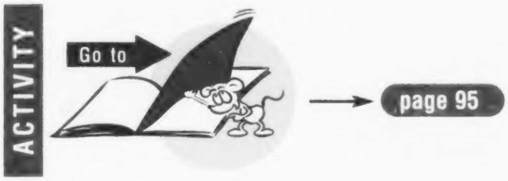
If you and your partner cannot work out a solution, you have a responsibility to share your concerns with the teacher. Don't wait until the night before the project is due — your teacher will be less sympathetic if you leave it to the last moment.

It would be better for both partners to go together, but if not, go by yourself and let the teacher know that you told your partner you would do this. Be prepared to brainstorm solutions.

Once you have a new plan, it may be necessary to double your efforts to meet the timeline. Working with other people and working out difficulties are great opportunities for learning!

Assess your people skills

Assess your people skills by completing the *Getting along with others inventory* on page 95 in the activity section. Use the information to become more aware of the skills you have and to identify the areas you want to improve.



Teasing

As unpleasant as it might be, teasing is a fact of life when a number of students get together. Some of it may be good-natured. People may see teasing as a way of making you a part of the group.

Some teasing may be insults disguised as humour. Some people may not even be aware that they are hurting others with their comments. You have to make a choice about what kind of teasing you'll react to and what you'll ignore.

Be aware of how *you* use teasing. Don't risk isolating people by making them uncomfortable or self-conscious with your wisecracks.

If someone hurts your feelings, you need to let them know. A low-key message, such as, "Okay, it's getting personal; we better stop now" or "I don't find this funny" usually puts an end to teasing. Bullying is another matter.

Bullying

Students who bully others are often unhappy, lonely or frustrated. Bullying gives them the illusion of power. By putting others down, bullies feel like they are bigger and stronger.

Students who are bullied often feel scared, alone and helpless. They may become depressed and isolate themselves from others. Their grades in school may be affected. No one deserves to be bullied. There are some steps you can take to stop people who try to bully you or others.

The silent majority

Chances are, you've seen someone being bullied. What did you do? Did you try to stop it? Did you walk away? The "silent majority" is made up of students who witness bullying but don't know what to do about it so they ignore it.

Students who witness bullying walk away for many reasons, such as: being scared they'll get hurt, not wanting to be called names, not knowing the people involved, or not caring enough to get involved. Walking away is wrong. It gives people who bully power and encourages them to continue.

By standing up to people who bully others, you can help put a stop to bullying and keep your school safe. Here are three things you can do to help stop bullying:[31]

1. Tell the bully to stop. This works even better if you can get other students to join you. Look the person in the eye and say something like, "Jake, knock it off."
2. If you're afraid you might get hurt, move away and let the person know you are going for help. Find a teacher or other adult to step in. It's important to take action when another person is being hurt.
3. Invite the person who gets bullied to have lunch with you or join in on an activity. Involving that person in your group of friends will help him or her feel included and less alone.

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[31] Adapted from The Alberta Teachers' Association, *Bullying: What You Can Do About It — A Guide for Upper Elementary Students and Their Parents* (Edmonton, AB: The Alberta Teachers' Association, 1999), p. 2. Adapted with permission.

What to do if you're being bullied

If you're being bullied, there are some things you can do.

1. Stand up straight and look sure of yourself, confident. This lets the person doing the bullying know that he or she has no power over you.

2. Humour can help to diffuse a tense situation. Try responding to teasing using a snappy comeback that is funny but respectful. For example, if someone calls you stupid you might say something like, "Maybe, but don't tell my parents — they think I'm a genius!" or "Yeah, maybe I've been reading too many of those *For Dummy* books."

3. Distract the bully with a compliment — you'll catch them off guard. You might say something like, "Sarah, your T-shirt is great. You must have enjoyed EdgeFest." Make sure you look and sound like you mean it.

4. Don't let bullying turn into a physical fight. You could get hurt or blamed for starting the trouble. If the person doing the bullying demands you give him or her something that belongs to you, hand it over and walk away. Don't risk getting hurt over personal possessions. Tell a trusted adult immediately.[32]

5. Stick with a friend. A person who bullies may be less likely to bother you if you have someone to support you. Try to avoid places where the person who bullies you hangs out.[32]

6. Tell someone you trust. This could be your parents or someone at school, like a counsellor or teacher. They will help you put a stop to the problem.[32] Bullies depend on secrecy and when their behaviour is made public, it takes away much of their power.

Bullying on television or in the movies is often portrayed as funny — it makes people laugh. In real life, bullying is unpleasant and hurtful. It gets in the way of people feeling safe and welcome at school.

To sum it all up

People skills make a difference in school. Getting along with others is an important part of making school work for you.

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[32] Adapted from The Alberta Teachers' Association, *Bullying: What You Can Do About It — A Guide for Upper Elementary Students and Their Parents* (Edmonton, AB: The Alberta Teachers' Association, 1999), pp. 3–4. Adapted with permission.

CHAPTER

7

Make School Work for You

- Know Yourself
- Get Organized
- Make Every Class Count
- Use Tests to Show What You Know
- Present Your Learning
- Get Along with Others
- Get People on Your Side
- Stay Motivated

CHAPTER 7

Get People on Your Side

Teamwork is important. Building a network of people who can help and support you throughout junior and senior high school can make a big difference. Knowing that you have a team of people on your side makes difficult times easier to handle. When problems arise or decisions need to be made, it is important to have people to talk to.

Who do you need on your team?

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So, who should be on your team? It's up to you, but it's a good idea to have a number of the key players on your education team, including:

- your parents
- your teachers
- the school counsellor
- friends who have a positive influence on you.

Honour your commitments

In order for your team to work, everyone must honour their commitments. That includes YOU. If meetings are scheduled, you need to be there — on time and prepared to participate. If you agree to try a new skill or complete a task, you need to follow through.

Honouring your commitments tells people you are on your way to becoming a mature, independent adult. You will gain the respect of your team and they will be prepared to go the extra mile with you.

Participate in all meetings

In the earlier grades, one or both of your parents were your advocates working with your teachers to ensure you received the best possible education. You may have attended some or all of your parent-teacher conferences, but ultimately the adults made the decisions.

Now, in junior and senior high school, it's time to take on the role of being your own advocate and start participating in decisions about your own education and your future. You need to attend meetings concerning your education and be prepared to contribute your thoughts and ideas.

Ask for what you need

Being a self-advocate means that there are times when you need to ask for things, such as an alternate assignment, an extension on a deadline or notes from a class you missed. No matter what you're asking for, let the person know that you have thought about the situation and are prepared to contribute to the solution.

By approaching people with a solution, you let them know that you are taking responsibility for your situation and that you don't expect them to solve the problem for you. Be flexible. You may need to negotiate a solution that is acceptable to everyone involved.

Get your teacher on your side

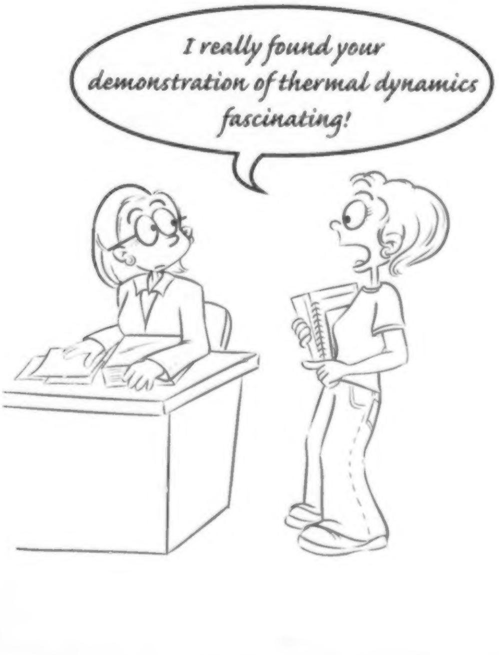
- Get your teacher's attention in positive ways.
- Make eye contact.

  It will help your teacher notice you and help you listen more carefully to what the teacher is saying.
- Nod your head every once in a while to show you are listening.
- Pay attention to the way you communicate without words.

  Do you slouch or sit up straight in class? Do you moan or sigh loudly whenever the teacher gives a homework assignment or announces a quiz? These nonverbal clues can affect the grade your teacher thinks you deserve.
- Volunteer an opinion or answer during class discussion.

  To make sure you're adding something meaningful, be prepared. Keep up on your assignments and pay attention to what others are saying.
- When you need help, ask for it in a reasonable and informed manner.

  Present solutions, not complaints or problems. Review ideas for possible solutions on pages 4–6.
- When your teacher does something you find helpful or particularly interesting, take a few minutes at the end of class to let the teacher know.


I really found your demonstration of thermal dynamics fascinating!

Take charge of problems

Suppose you have a problem with a class or teacher and you don't know quite how to approach the teacher. Take charge one step at a time.[33]

- Know what you want to ask or discuss. Write it on paper if necessary.
- Rehearse your approach and questions or statements in your head and out loud.
- Find a time when the teacher is not busy and is not in a hurry. If necessary, set up an appointment.
- Arrive a minute or two early or be prepared to stay after class.
- Begin with a positive statement. For example, "I'm sincerely interested in learning the information your class offers."
- Then, clearly state what you want or need. For example, "Lately I'm having a hard time understanding and keeping up, and I'm looking for ways to help myself."
- Actively listen to what the teacher suggests. Take notes if necessary.
- Thank the teacher and assure him or her that you will try to put the suggestions into practice.
- Tell the teacher that you will get in touch in two weeks (or an appropriate time) to review your progress.
- Find ways to demonstrate your interest in class. Take part in discussions. Ask thoughtful questions and try to use the teacher's suggestions.
- MOST OF ALL ... be positive, courteous, considerate, willing to see the other side and willing to try.

Ask for feedback

You just got an assignment back and the mark is okay, but not as high as you hoped. You check for comments from the teacher to help you understand what he or she liked and where you lost marks — but there are no obvious clues. What do you do?

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[33] From *Learning to Learn: Strengthening Study Skills and Brain Power* by Gloria Frender; IP 190-5, Copyright 1990 by Incentive Publications, Inc., Nashville, TN 37215, p. 229. Used by permission. This information can only be reproduced on a limited basis for individual use by teachers/students.

Use feedback

No matter where feedback comes from, be prepared to do something with it. Pat yourself on the back for the positives and work to find solutions for the negatives. Regular feedback helps you monitor your progress and make necessary changes.

You can write off the mark and tell yourself you don't really care anyway or you can approach the teacher and get some verbal feedback. The teacher probably will not change the mark, but may provide you with valuable information about what he or she was looking for. The next time you complete an assignment, you will know what to do differently. Asking for feedback also shows that you care about the work that you do and are taking responsibility for improving your performance.

You can also ask for feedback about how you are doing in a course, decisions you have made about your life after high school or your performance on a sports team. First, take time to ask yourself how you are doing — what is going well and what could you improve on. Then, talk to others and compare your thinking with the feedback you get.

Set up a study group

Study groups can be a valuable tool to help you improve on tests and class assignments. For many students, the discussion that occurs during a study group helps them remember concepts better than if they learn them on their own. The keys to a successful study group are making good choices about who the members are, making sure the study group members do their share of the work and staying focused.

- Limit your study group to three or four members. Look for students who are successful in class. They ask questions, take notes and complete assignments. Don't assume that your best friend will make a good study group member.[34]

- Plan for regular meetings — once a week if possible. It is better to spread your studying out over many short meetings than to cram it all into one long meeting right before an exam.[34]

More on next page

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[34] Adapted from *School Power: Study Skill Strategies for Succeeding in School (Revised and Updated Edition)* (p. 85) by Jeanne Shay Schumm, Ph.D. © 2001. Used with permission from Free Spirit Publishing Inc., Minneapolis, MN; 1-800-735-7323; *www.freespirit.com*. All rights reserved.

- Decide on a place to study that will work for your group. A library or empty classroom is a good place to consider. A group member's house may also work providing the group is able to remain focused and on task in that setting. Your group may want to try a couple of different locations and times before deciding what works best.

- Set agendas for each meeting. Decide what you want to cover and assign each group member part of the material to teach the rest of the group.[34]

- Before the meeting, each group member should prepare a short mini-lesson reviewing their material. Include possible test questions. (See page 39 for a strategy for predicting test questions.) Part of the mini-lesson should be identifying concepts that might be confusing or difficult to understand.[34]

- One group member should be responsible for keeping the group on task and on time. A kitchen timer can help.[34]

- During the mini-lessons, group members should ask questions and add any information that may have been overlooked.[34]

- At the end of each mini-lesson, the practice questions should be discussed. Brainstorm other questions for the topic.[34]

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[34] Adapted from *School Power: Study Skill Strategies for Succeeding in School (Revised and Updated Edition)* (p. 85) by Jeanne Shay Schumm, Ph.D. © 2001. Used with permission from Free Spirit Publishing Inc., Minneapolis, MN; 1-800-735-7323; *www.freespirit.com*. All rights reserved.

CHAPTER

8

- Know Yourself
- Get Organized
- Make Every Class Count
- Use Tests to Show What You Know
- Present Your Learning
- Get Along with Others
- Get People on Your Side
- Stay Motivated

Make School Work for You

CHAPTER 8

Stay Motivated

Doing your best all day, every day, all year, requires a great deal of effort. You will need to keep yourself motivated — no one else can do this for you.

Review your goals

Think of your big goals. What kind of life do you want? What kind of career choices do you have? Consider how what you do each day contributes to these goals. (Look over the goal-setting ideas on page 8.)

Think of school as your workplace

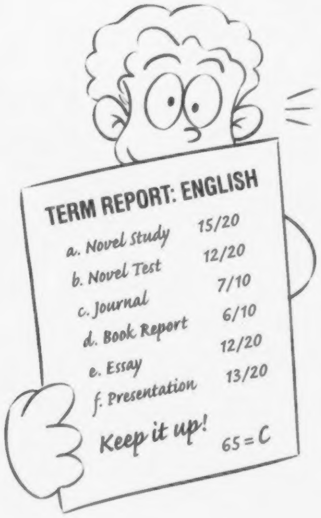
Going to school is your job right now, so try to be business-like. Think of what an employer would expect — arriving on time, giving your best effort, completing all tasks. A teacher expects no less.

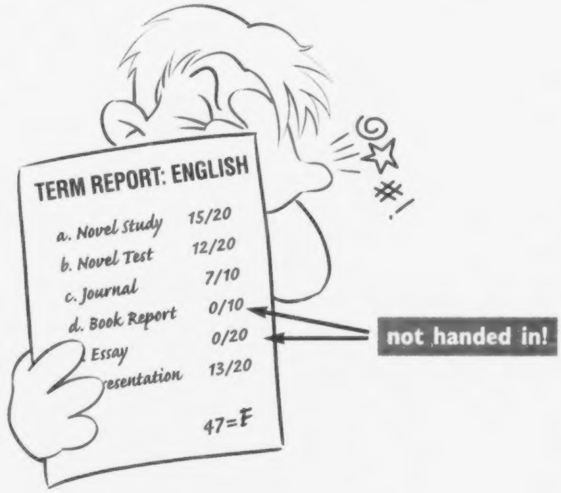
Use self-talk

Say positive and encouraging statements to yourself throughout the day. Give yourself needed pats on the back and nods of encouragement.

Know what counts

Make sure you understand what is expected in each of your courses. Write out the mark breakdown for the course and calculate how you are doing. Know what a zero (as in a missed assignment) really means.


TERM REPORT: ENGLISH
a. Novel Study 15/20
b. Novel Test 12/20
c. Journal 7/10
d. Book Report 6/10
e. Essay 12/20
f. Presentation 13/20
Keep it up!
65 = C


TERM REPORT: ENGLISH
a. Novel Study 15/20
b. Novel Test 12/20
c. Journal 7/10
d. Book Report 0/10
Essay 0/20
esentation 13/20
47=F
#!
not handed in!

Assess your own work

Before you hand in an assignment evaluate it yourself — what would you have to add or change to earn a higher mark?

Ask for feedback

Ask other students, your parents or siblings to read over assignments and make suggestions on how to improve them. Practise a presentation with a friend and ask for friendly feedback.

Reward yourself

Give yourself small rewards for completing work or meeting goals.

Celebrate your successes

Notice when you are doing well. Hang certificates above your desk and highlight positive teacher comments on assignments. Make a list of 10 things you did well over the last month.

Work within time limits

Before starting a task, estimate how long it will take. Set a timer. At the mid-way point, check to see if you are on target. Analyze your own work habits. Identify any time-wasting habits and develop ways to work faster and meet deadlines.

Keep working when you are stuck[35]

- Read the directions TWO more times.
- Highlight key words.
- Look at an example and talk through the steps in your mind.
- Copy the sample question and work through it on your own.
- Give yourself a fresh start. Recopy the question or write your answer on another piece of paper. Then, work through it by yourself.
- Mark the question with a star (*) and come back later.

Add to your study tricks

Try different ways to review notes. Use highlighters and experiment with mind maps, flashcards and graphic organizers. (Look over pages 40–41 for more ideas.)

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[35] From Dana Antayà-Moore and Catherine M. Walker, *Smart Learning: Strategies for Parents, Teachers and Kids* (Edmonton, AB: Smart Learning, 1996), p. 5. Reproduced with permission. For ordering information, fax 780-439-3915.

Be a problem-solver[36]

Step ❶ **Face it — YOU have the problem.**

Even if you think it is entirely the other person's fault, you have a problem because the problem bothers you. Take ownership.

Step ❷ **Identify the problem.**

Identify what it is that bothers you. If you can see the problem for what is it is, you can begin to look for solutions.

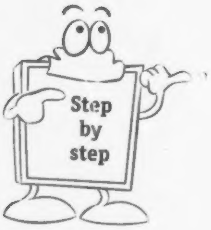
Step ❸ **Acknowledge your feelings.**

Give yourself permission to dislike the problem. "I don't like this and that's okay. Now, what can I do to get what I want or need?" Refocus your energy on finding solutions.

Step ❹ **Look at your options.**

Be practical, realistic and serious.
- Will these solutions really work?
- Can I give each solution an honest try?

Write the solutions down and choose which one to try. Decide what you need to do first and gather any resources you need.



Step ❺ **Put your solution into practice.**

Begin with a positive attitude. You've thought through your solution step-by-step. If your solution doesn't work, change one part of your plan or try another solution. Keep working until you are satisfied.

Expand your support network

Talk to someone in class that you would like to get to know better. Choose a teacher that you trust and ask for feedback on an assignment you would like to improve. Consider joining an extracurricular group where you can make new friends.

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[36] From *Learning to learn: Strengthening Study Skills and Brain Power* by Gloria Frender; IP 190-5, Copyright 1990 by Incentive Publications, Inc., Nashville, TN 37215, pp. 227-228. Used by permission. This information can only be reproduced on a limited basis for individual use by teachers/students.

Share your skills and knowledge

If there is a subject you are particularly good at and really enjoy, use your expertise to help a friend, teach a younger brother or sister, or tutor another student.

Let go of your mistakes

Think about your successes and stop dwelling on past mistakes. Take a recent situation that is bothering you and figure out what you learned from it. Then, visualize that mistake flying off.

Take learning risks

Try something you haven't tried before. Volunteer when the teacher asks for a student to come to the front of the room for a demonstration. Work with a partner that you don't know. Use these opportunities to find out new information about yourself.

Look on the lighter side

Make an effort to see the humour in things. Try turning a mistake into a funny story. The physical act of smiling makes people more relaxed and open to learning.

Monitor your own television viewing

Make sure you are not wasting your time passively watching television. If you watch more than 10-15 hours a week, you watch too much.

Find out what inspires you

Look for music, poems and stories that make you feel strong and upbeat. Find quotes and pictures that speak to your heart. Tape a copy of an inspirational quote or poem on the inside of your binder; sing part of a favourite song to yourself, or recall a favourite story or character as you face challenges throughout the day.

Find out what's new in technology

Check out computer stores and web sites to see what new developments might help you. Talk with your school's computer teacher to see if there is new software that would work for you.

Learn about learning

Learn more about learning. Find out about the seven different kinds of smarts. Check out a library book on study skills or watch a documentary about how the brain works. Ask a teacher or counsellor what they've read lately about ways to improve learning. See what new ideas work for you.

Make School Work for You

Activities

- Know Yourself
- Get Organized
- Make Every Class Count
- Use Tests to Show What You Know
- Present Your Learning
- Get Along with Others
- Get People on Your Side
- Stay Motivated

Activity 1

Uncover your challenges inventory

Date: ____________________

Name: ____________________

		always	usually	sometimes	not yet
1.	I come to school every day.	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.	I come to class on time.	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.	I come to class with the materials I need.	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	I come to class prepared; e.g., textbook read, assignments complete.	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.	I leave my worries outside the classroom door.	☐	☐	☐	☐
6.	I can follow written directions.	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.	I can follow spoken directions.	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.	I understand the new ideas the teacher presents.	☐	☐	☐	☐
9.	I can focus my attention in class.	☐	☐	☐	☐
10.	I contribute to class discussions.	☐	☐	☐	☐
11.	I take accurate and detailed notes.	☐	☐	☐	☐
12.	My notebooks are organized and complete.	☐	☐	☐	☐
13.	I am clear and concise when writing.	☐	☐	☐	☐
14.	My written work is accurate, legible and organized.	☐	☐	☐	☐
15.	I finish assignments within time limits.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Activity I (continued)

Uncover your challenges inventory

	always	usually	sometimes	not yet
16. I know when and who to ask for help.	☐	☐	☐	☐
17. I can sit still for long periods of time.	☐	☐	☐	☐
18. I do not distract or chat with others.	☐	☐	☐	☐
19. I remain calm and focused during tests.	☐	☐	☐	☐
20. I do well on tests.	☐	☐	☐	☐

A. To get more feedback about my in-class behaviour I could talk with:

B. Do teachers ever mention a specific in-class behaviour to you? For example, "Don't chat with your neighbours," or "You need to bring a pencil everyday." Write these comments down even if you don't like them or agree with them — there may be helpful information in this feedback.

For more information on identifying your in-class challenges, please see page 2.

Activity 2

Date: ______________

Name: ______________

Know your own strengths inventory

A. List four successful experiences you have had in the last 12 months:

- ______________ • ______________
- ______________ • ______________

B. List four everyday things you do well:

- ______________ • ______________
- ______________ • ______________

C. List two things you could teach someone else:

- ______________ • ______________

D. List 10 positive words to describe yourself:

- ______________ • ______________
- ______________ • ______________
- ______________ • ______________
- ______________ • ______________
- ______________ • ______________

E. List two things that really matter to you:

- ______________ • ______________

F. List two things you can do for yourself that will always makes you feel good:

- ______________ • ______________

G. List two people who you can count on for help and support:

- ______________ • ______________

For more information on identifying your learning strengths, please see page 3.

Activity 3

What works for me inventory

Date: ____________

Name: ____________

A. How I look after myself

- How much sleep do I need? ____________
- What kind of food makes me feel the most alert? ____________
- What snacks are good energy sources? ____________
- What times of the day do I need to eat? ____________
- What time of the day do I have the most energy? ____________
- What time of the day do I have the least energy? ____________
- What type of exercise makes me feel energized? ____________
- What kinds of activities help me relax? ____________

B. Tools that help me learn

- What writing tool works best for me (type of pen, pencil, colour of ink)? ____________
- What kind of paper helps me keep organized (wide-ruled, unlined, wide margins, pre-punched)? ____________
- What colour paper do I find the easiest to read? ____________
- What binder system works for me? ____________
- What other supplies help me keep organized; e.g., white-out, post-it notes, ruler? ____________
- What calculator works best for me; e.g., size, features? ____________
- What spellchecker works best for me? ____________
- What is my favourite dictionary? ____________
- What other reference books help me learn? ____________
- What computer programs are helpful to my learning? ____________

C. In the classroom

- What seat in the classroom works best for me? ____________
- What do I read best from?
  __ chalkboard __ overhead __ projector __ chart paper __ my own copy
- Does the colour of ink (or chalk) make a difference? ____________
- Does the type of print; e.g., printed, handwritten or typed, make a difference? ____________
- Does the size and spacing of print make a difference? ____________

Activity 3 (continued)

What works for me inventory

D. Rank in order from 1 to 12 which directions work best for me:

____ teacher explains aloud
____ teacher writes directions on the board
____ teacher does example on the board
____ teacher asks another student to demonstrate
____ teacher asks all students to try a sample at their desks
____ I read the directions while the teacher reads them
____ I read the directions on my own
____ teacher shows me at my desk
____ another student explains a second time and answers my questions
____ I watch what another student does
____ I try it on my own and then check with teacher
____ I try it on my own and then compare with another student

E. Tricks I use to keep myself organized (see page 14 for ideas):

F. Tricks I use to keep myself focused and on task in class (see pages 25–29 for ideas):

G. Special things that teachers can do to help me learn:

For more information on identifying different accommodations in the classroom, please see page 3.

Activity 4

Date: ____________________

Name: ____________________

Goal setting organizer

Is your goal

☐ Specific?
☐ Measurable?
☐ Achievable?
☐ Realistic?
☐ Time-based?

Goal My goal is to …

Rationale I chose this goal because …

Action plan To reach this goal I will …

Measurement How will I know if I am successful?

Evaluation What would I do differently in the future?

For more information on goal setting, please see page 8.

Activity 5

Date: ____________________

Name: ____________________

Know your time limits checklist

I would like to participate in the following extracurricular activities:

- ________________________________ (hours per week) ______
- ________________________________ (hours per week) ______
- ________________________________ (hours per week) ______

My time commitments this year are:

A. My family responsibilities after school:

- ________________________________ (hours per week) ______
- ________________________________ (hours per week) ______
- ________________________________ (hours per week) ______

B. My athletic/team sport commitments after school:

- ________________________________ (hours per week) ______
- ________________________________ (hours per week) ______
- ________________________________ (hours per week) ______

C. Additional lessons, organizations or volunteer commitments:

- ________________________________ (hours per week) ______
- ________________________________ (hours per week) ______
- ________________________________ (hours per week) ______

D. My part-time job commitment during the school year:

- ________________________________ (hours per week) ______
- ________________________________ (hours per week) ______
- ________________________________ (hours per week) ______

E. Other:

- ________________________________ (hours per week) ______
- ________________________________ (hours per week) ______
- ________________________________ (hours per week) ______

For more information on time management,
please see page 15.

Activity 6

Daily schedule

Date: ____________________

Name: ____________________

Week of ______________________________ to ______________________________

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
8:00							
9:00							
10:00							
11:00							
12:00							
1:00							
2:00							
3:00							
4:00							
5:00							
6:00							
7:00							
8:00							
9:00							

For more information on making a daily schedule, please see page 15.

Activity 7

Note-taking formats

Name ____________________________

Column note-taking

Subject: Date:

Main ideas	Supporting details

Question and answer note-taking

Subject: Date:

Questions	Supporting details

For more information on note taking, please see page 32.

Activity 8

Date: ______________________

Name: ______________________

Note-taking inventory[37]

From time to time, it's smart to check the quality of your notes to see how you're doing. Then you'll know if you need to make any changes or improvements.

Check a sample of your class notes with this note-taking inventory.

My notes contain:	Yes	Not yet
1. Date of class	☐	☐
2. Title	☐	☐
3. Writing neat enough to read	☐	☐
4. No more than one idea per line	☐	☐
5. Plenty of blank space to add extra ideas later	☐	☐
6. All main ideas	☐	☐
7. All important details	☐	☐
8. All key terms and definitions	☐	☐
9. Abbreviations as appropriate	☐	☐
10. No unnecessary words	☐	☐

Count one point for each Yes box checked and add up your points to see how you score ______

9–10 points:	You're a great note-taker!
7–8 points:	You're a good note-taker.
5–6 points:	You need to take better notes.
4 points or less:	Make a note of this: practise, practise, practise!

For more information on note taking, please see page 34.

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[37] Adapted from *School Power: Study Skill Strategies for Succeeding in School (Revised and Updated Edition)* (p. 31) by Jeanne Shay Schumm, Ph.D. © 2001. Used with permission from Free Spirit Publishing Inc., Minneapolis, MN; 1-800-735-7323; *www.freespirit.com*. All rights reserved.

Activity 9

Study organizer[38]

Date: ____________________

Name: ____________________

A. DEFINITIONS/TERMS
(Know what these words mean and be able to use them.)

B. CLASSIFY
(Be able to compare and contrast — know the similarities and differences.)

C. EXPLAIN
("What if . . ." "Tell why . . ." "Give reasons . . .")

D. DRAW (and label)

E. DEMONSTRATE

For more information on studying for a test, please see page 36.

---

[38] From Dana Antayá-Moore and Catherine M. Walker, *Smart Learning: Strategies for Parents, Teachers and Kids* (Edmonton, AB: Smart Learning, 1996), p. 8. Reproduced with permission. For ordering information, fax 780-439-3915.

Activity 10

Paragraph planner [39]

Date: ____________________

Name: ____________________

Topic: ______________________________

Key words

Introductory sentence (Tell what you are going to write about and grab your reader's interest.)

First detail sentence

Follow-up sentence (more information about first detail)

Second detail sentence

Follow-up sentence (more information about second detail)

Third detail sentence

Follow-up sentence (more information about third detail)

Closing sentence (Say your opening sentence in a different way.)

For more information on writing paragraphs, please see page 50.

---

[39] From Edmonton Public Schools, *Thinking Tools for Kids: Practical Organizers* (Edmonton, AB: Edmonton Public Schools, Resource Development Services, 1999), p. 219. Reproduced with permission.

Activity 11

Linear outline

Date: ____________________

Name: ____________________

Subject/Title

Introduction

Subtopics

1. ____________________
2. ____________________
3. ____________________

Supporting Information

Summary

References

For more information on using a linear outline, please see page 52.

Activity 12

Date: ____________________

Name: ____________________

Getting along with others inventory

In class

	always	usually	sometimes	not yet
• I arrive in class on time.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I bring needed books and supplies.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I greet other students as I enter the classroom.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I answer questions with a few sentences.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• When I start a conversation, I check that the other people appear interested.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I limit small talk to before and after class.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I sit up straight.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I remove distracting hoods and hats.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I make eye contact with others.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I show active listening by nodding my head and turning to the speaker.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I volunteer at least two answers per class.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• If I've missed directions, I look to other students for clues.	☐	☐	☐	☐

With partners and in small groups

• I am willing to work with a variety of partners.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I try to make others feel comfortable by making small talk.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I show that I'm willing to work with others by moving closer.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I am polite to people I would rather not work with.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I listen carefully to directions.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I clarify directions with my partners.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I make a rough plan.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Activity 12 (continued)

Getting along with others inventory

	always	usually	sometimes	not yet
• I check the deadlines.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I use a quiet voice.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I stay with my group and focus on the task.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I resist complaining about the assignment.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I do my share of the work.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I volunteer ideas.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I show good listening.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I encourage others to contribute their ideas.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I refrain from put-downs of other people's ideas.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I am willing to try new roles, even if I'm uncomfortable.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I support my partners in group presentations.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Solving problems

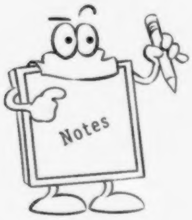
• I use all my skills to build a positive working relationship with partners.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I let partners know when I think we have a problem.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I am willing to make a new plan and start over.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• If necessary, I'll share my concerns with the teacher.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Getting connected

• I participate in at least one extracurricular activity each term.	☐	☐	☐	☐

For more information on getting along with others, please see page 66.

NOTES



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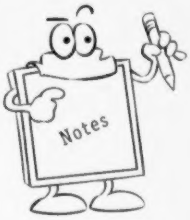

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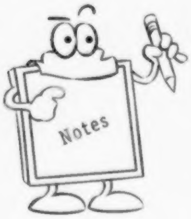

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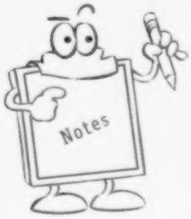

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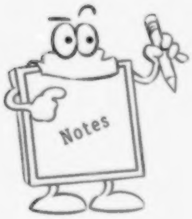

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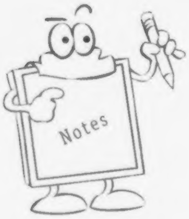

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Make School Work for You

- was developed jointly by Alberta Learning and the Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta
- was written by two experienced writer-teachers
- is easy to read, easy to use
- includes ideas students can use to get organized, make every class count, get along with others and use tests to show learning.

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Alberta
LEARNING

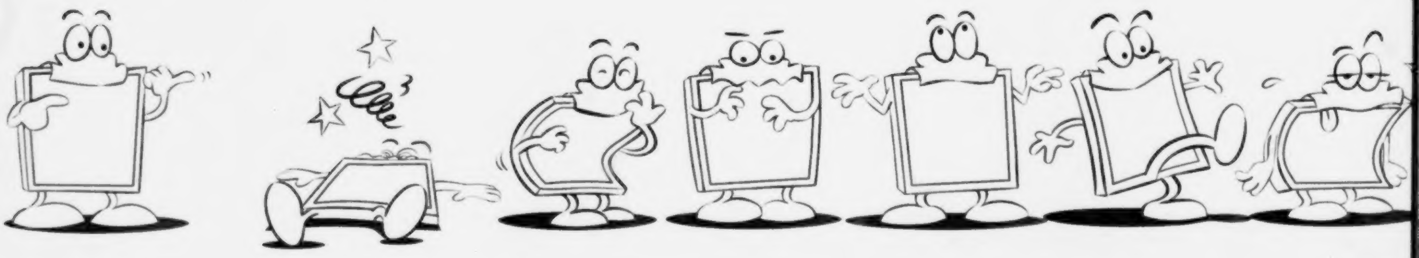
Make School Work for You

Inside

You'll find ideas you can use to:

Offers practical ideas for how to do better at school

- know yourself
- get organized
- make every class count
- use tests to show what you know
- present your learning
- get along with others
- get people on your side
- stay motivated



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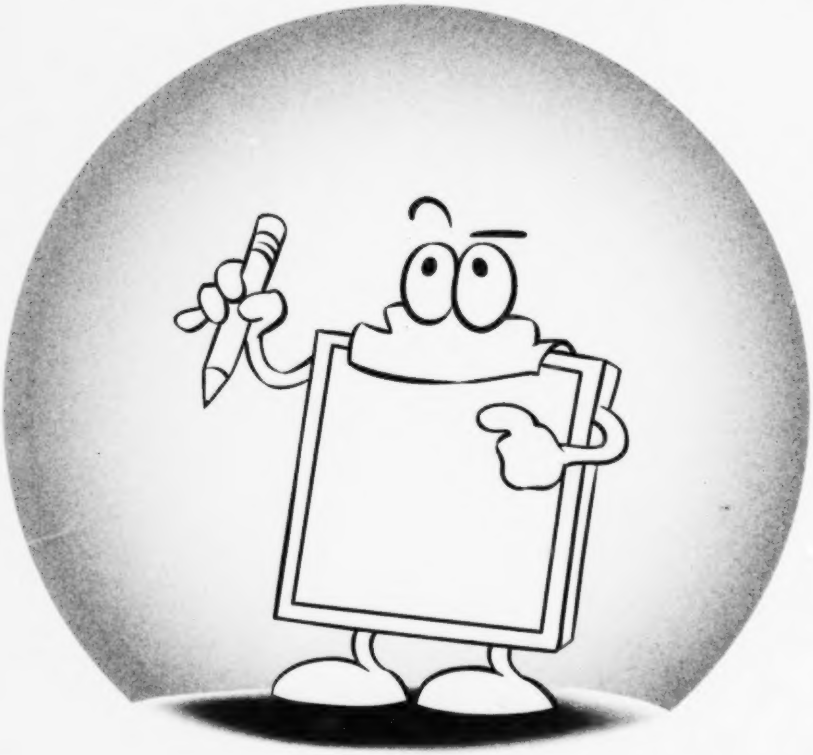
Teacher implementation guide

Make School Work for You



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Make School Work for You

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This document is intended for:

Students	
Teachers	✓
Administrators	✓
Counsellors	✓
Parents	
General Public	

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Introduction

This teacher implementation guide contains practical ideas you can use to make the most of the student resource *Make School Work for You* in your classroom.

Inside you'll find:
- ways to familiarize students with the contents of *Make School Work for You*
- sample instructional activities for introducing skills and strategies
- ideas for assessing students' learning
- blackline masters from the Activities section of the student resource.

Choose the ideas that will work in your classroom and adapt them to best meet the learning needs of your students.

Both the student resource *Make School Work for You* and this teacher implementation guide are a joint project of the Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta and Alberta Learning. They are companion pieces to the teacher resource, *Teaching Students with Learning Disabilities* and the parent resource, *The Parent Advantage: Helping Children Become More Successful Learners at Home and School, Grades 1–9.*

The student resource is also available on audio CD.

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1 Use as a core text for study skills courses
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1 Work with individual students

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(59) Evaluation and feedback

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Ideas for using the student resource

There are a number of ways teachers can use the student resource *Make School Work for You*, including the following.

Teach study skills in content areas

Teaching study skills in context is an effective way to learn and reinforce them. Plan a unit on study skills or focus on single skills relevant to current course work.

The following skills, outlined in detail in *Make School Work for You*, are especially relevant to many subject areas:

- note taking
- working in a small group
- preparing for a test
- projects and presentations.

Use as a core text for study skills courses

Many schools offer learning strategies or study skills courses. This resource could be used as the main student text or as a supplemental text for such a course. It's recommended that all students receive a copy of the resource so they can use it throughout their school career.

Organize study skills workshops

Organize a non-credit study skills workshop to run at noon hours, after school or on weekends. The workshop can be organized as a single one-hour session or as a number of sessions offered over several months. Participants can use *Make School Work for You* as the basic text and as a take-away reference. Use and adapt the Getting Started Activities, pages 3–5, and Sample Instructional Activities, pages 21–32, of this guidebook.

Youth groups or community service agencies can also organize study skills workshops.

Work with individual students

Make School Work for You is a useful tool for individual students who need to work on a particular study skill. Specific sections can be identified for the student to read and discuss. Specific activities can also be assigned.

Getting started activities

This section contains activities teachers can use to introduce the student resource and get students thinking about how they can become better learners.

Quick tour

Create your own quick tour or use the blackline master provided on page 8 to help familiarize students with the contents of *Make School Work for You*. Students can work alone, in pairs or in small groups. Set a time limit to keep students focused.

Treasure hunt

This activity helps students examine *Make School Work for You* in more depth. Students respond to various scenarios by looking through the book for one or more strategies they can apply. Take time to discuss student answers with the class to demonstrate the range of strategies that fit different scenarios. See the blackline master on pages 9–10.

People search

Use the People search on page 11 to get students thinking and talking about their own work habits. Give each student a People search worksheet and set a time limit for students to collect signatures from their classmates in all 18 squares. Discuss the results.

True or false?

Students work through the True or false? sheet on page 12 by themselves and then compare answers with a partner. Use the answer key on page 18 for further discussion.

Guess the key words

Introduce the use of acronyms to remember the key words of different strategies. Working in pairs, students guess the key words for each of the four strategies outlined on the blackline master on page 13. Set a time limit and encourage creativity. Find the acronyms in the student resource and compare the original key words with those students generate. Students may end up inventing new strategies!

Five Ws and an H

For this activity, students work alone, in pairs or in small groups to develop who, what, when, where, why and how questions based on the information in *Make School Work for You*. Students then exchange questions and search for the answers. Compare and discuss results. See the blackline master on page 14.

One point of interest

Students find a page, section, cartoon, strategy or idea in *Make School Work for You* that captures interest and attention. Students share their findings with a partner, small group or the class. Students should be prepared to explain their choices.

Quotable quotes

Students find one memorable quote in *Make School Work for You* that speaks to them and how they learn. Have students explain their choices. Make a bulletin board display by having students write the quotes in word balloons.

All school handbook

Students list all the subjects they are taking this school year along the left-hand margin of a piece of paper, skipping two lines between subjects. Students then identify two pieces of information in *Make School Work for You*, such as chapters, strategies or checklists, that could help them in each subject. Students share their results with a partner or small group.

Wall charts

Students work alone, in pairs or in small groups to design wall charts based on the strategies and ideas in *Make School Work for You*. For example, "Ask for what you need" on page 5 in the student resource would make a good poster. Post charts in the classroom or create a display in the school library.

Sharing sessions

Once a week, make time for students to discuss a situation in which they used an idea or strategy from *Make School Work for You* to help them with their learning. This allows students to see how they can use strategies in different learning contexts. They may discover new ideas from hearing about other students' experiences.

Chapter reviews

Students work in pairs or small groups to summarize one chapter of *Make School Work for You* and present their review to the class. Presentations can take a variety of forms, including mind maps, posters or points displayed on an overhead transparency. The reviews should highlight the general theme of the chapter and the main points.

Blackline masters

Student name: ______________________________ Date: ____________________________

Check it out!

Quick tour

Turn to the Table of Contents in *Make School Work for You*. Write down the page number that would help you answer each of the following questions.

1. How do you back plan? _____
2. What kinds of accommodations could you ask for in a testing situation? _____
3. What is an ideal number for a study group? _____
4. How do you splashdown? _____
5. What test-taking strategy helps you predict test questions? _____
6. What question should you ask yourself as you highlight information? _____
7. Who are good people to have on your team? _____
8. What are some disadvantages of using computers for writing? _____
9. What is plagiarism? _____
10. Why is a little anxiety an advantage? _____
11. What are the five steps to problem solving? _____
12. How do you take good notes? _____
13. What can you do when you're stuck on a question? _____
14. How much TV watching is too much? _____
15. What can you do if you see someone being bullied? _____

Student name: ______________________ Date: ____________________

Treasure hunt

Use your book to find strategies and ideas that could help you in the following scenarios.

1. You have an assignment due tomorrow and you haven't even started. You're worried about how this will affect your mark and you're determined this will not happen again!

   ____

   ____

2. Final exams are coming up in four weeks. You want to start studying now so you can do your best.

   ____

   ____

3. Walking home from school, you see a student from your class being bullied. The next day you see the same thing.

   ____

   ____

4. You've just got a new math teacher. Math is a challenge for you. You work hard and ask a lot of questions to make sure you understand the concepts. When you ask a question, the teacher makes a comment about students who don't pay attention the first time around.

   ____

   ____

5. Next week you have a major social studies presentation to give. You're nervous but you know you've got time to prepare.

   ____

   ____

Student name: ______________________ Date: ______________________

Treasure hunt (continued)

6. Your writing in your English class would be better if you could use your electronic spell checker for in-class assignments. How can you make this happen?

____

____

7. This year you want to join the school track and field team. To make the team you have to maintain a B average. You've always had to work hard to maintain a C average.

____

____

8. Sometimes you misread exam questions so you don't get a chance to answer the question and show what you know. You feel that if you could have test instructions on audiotape, you would get higher marks on important tests.

____

____

9. You've just sat down to write a big exam and suddenly you feel like you've forgotten everything you ever learned.

____

____

10. It's binder check time and, as usual, your binder is a mess.

____

____

Student name: ______________________ Date: ____________________

People search

Find someone who …

Stayed up past three in the morning to finish an assignment	Can type more than 20 wpm	Keeps a daytimer (or daily calendar)
Is a morning person	Studies for a test with a friend	Reads his or her notes aloud when studying for a test
Said "Thank you" to a teacher for a good lesson or some extra help	Has a very organized binder	Knows what college he or she wants to go to
Reads for enjoyment	Can tell you what SCORER stands for	Uses a highlighter to review notes
Has three or more pens on the desk	Speaks two languages	Knows how to do a *Power Point* presentation
Listened to a book on tape	Brings an electronic spell checker to class	Loves math

Student name: ______________________ Date: ______________________

True or false?

What do you believe about making school work for you?

Believe it or not!

T F 1. Avoid anxiety; it always has a negative effect on your performance.

T F 2. It's important to take a full course load each semester.

T F 3. Twenty-five hours of television viewing per week is reasonable.

T F 4. Avoid using abbreviations while taking notes.

T F 5. Most people concentrate best in the morning.

T F 6. When writing a test, finish each question before going on to the next one.

T F 7. Never listen to music when you are doing homework.

T F 8. Many high school textbooks are available on audiotape.

T F 9. If you are having difficulties in school, drop all your extracurricular activities to give yourself more time to focus on your studies.

T F 10. Never guess an answer on a test.

Student name: ______________________ Date: ______________________

Guess the key words

An acronym is a key word in which each letter stands for a specific word or idea. Acronyms are short cuts to help you remember and use important information.

For example, the COPS strategy for editing reminds you to consider:

C*apitalization*
O*rganization*
P*unctuation, and*
S*pelling.*

Look at the acronyms below and guess the key words that might be part of each strategy. One clue is provided.

Use this strategy to remind yourself of what to do when writing a test— **S** **C** **O** **R** **E***stimate your answers* **R**	To predict possible test questions, consider these factors— **C** **H***igher order questions* **A** **N** **C** **E**
Effective goals are— **S** **M***easurable* **A** **R** **T**	Use this strategy to help prepare for an oral presentation— **C** **H** **E** **C** **K***een to be heard*

Now, find the strategy in *Make School Work for You* that matches each acronym. Compare your key words with those in the book. Have you improved on the strategies?

Student name: ______________________ Date: ______________________

Five Ws and an H

Write **Who, What, When, Where, Why** and **How** questions based on the information in *Make School Work for You*. Exchange questions with a classmate and find the answers.

For example: What is SCORER?
Answer: *It's a test-taking strategy.*

WHO ANSWER
WHAT ANSWER
WHEN ANSWER
WHERE ANSWER
WHY ANSWER
HOW ANSWER

Answer keys

Answer key: Quick tour

1. How do you back plan? **pages 18–19, student resource**
2. What kinds of accommodations could you ask for in a testing situation? **page 42, student resource**
3. What is an ideal number for a study group? **page 73, student resource**
4. How do you splashdown? **page 43, student resource**
5. What test-taking strategy helps you predict test questions? **page 39, student resource**
6. What question should you ask yourself as you highlight information? **page 38, student resource**
7. Who are good people to have on your team? **page 69, student resource**
8. What are some disadvantages of using computers for writing? **pages 52–53, student resource**
9. What is plagiarism? **page 56, student resource**
10. Why is a little anxiety an advantage? **page 46, student resource**
11. What are the five steps to problem solving? **page 78, student resource**
12. How do you take good notes? **pages 29–34, student resource**
13. What can you do when you're stuck on a question? **page 77, student resource**
14. How much TV watching is too much? **page 79, student resource**
15. What can you do if you see someone being bullied? **page 67, student resource**

Answer key: Treasure hunt

1. You have an assignment due tomorrow and you haven't even started. You're worried about how this will affect your mark and you're determined this will not happen again!

   Answers may vary but could include: back planning, goal setting, know what counts.

2. Final exams are coming up in four weeks. You want to start studying now so you can do your best.

   Answers may vary but could include: ten study tricks, take a CHANCE = predict test questions, get organized.

3. Walking home from school, you see a student from your class being bullied. The next day you see the same thing.

   The silent majority.

4. You've just got a new math teacher. Math is a challenge for you. You work hard and ask a lot of questions to make sure you understand the concepts. When you ask a question, the teacher makes a comment about students who don't pay attention the first time around.

   Be a problem solver.

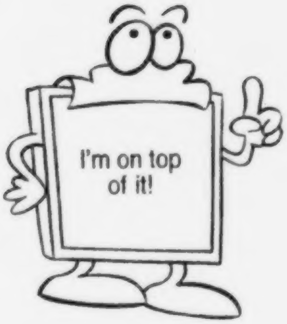
5. Next week you have a major social studies presentation to give. You're nervous but you know you've got time to prepare.

   Answers may vary but could include: projects and presentations, goal setting, use self-talk.

6. Your writing in your English class would be better if you could use your electronic spell checker for in-class assignments. How can you make this happen?

   Ask for what you need.

Answer key: Treasure hunt (continued)


I'm on top of it!

7. This year you want to join the school track and field team. To make the team you have to maintain a B average. You've always had to work hard to maintain a C average.

   Answers may vary but could include: goal setting, be test-wise, set up a study group.

8. Sometimes you misread exam questions so you don't get a chance to answer the question and show what you know. You feel that if you could have test instructions on audiotape, you would get higher marks on important tests.

   Answers may vary but could include: ask for what you need special accommodations for test taking.

9. You've just sat down to write a big exam and suddenly you feel like you've forgotten everything you ever learned.

   Answers may vary but could include: splashdown, be test-wise, be a high SCORER (a test-taking strategy).

10. It's binder check time and, as usual, your binder is a mess.

    Binder organization.

Answer key: True or false?

Believe it or not!

1. **False**. A little anxiety can be a good thing. It can heighten the senses, sharpen focus and serve as motivation to work a little harder.

2. **False**. Choose what is best for you. If you have a heavy course load one semester, it may be wise to schedule a spare so you can use that time to keep up with reading and assignments.

3. **False**. Try to limit yourself to less than 20 hours of television viewing per week.

4. **False**. Abbreviations may help you write more quickly, and as long as you understand what each abbreviation stands for, it's an effective note-taking strategy.

5. **False**. People's personal rhythms and best times of the day vary widely. It's important you find out what time of the day is your most alert time.

6. **False**. If you are stuck on a test question, mark that question with a star, skip it and go on to the next one. At the end of the test, return to the questions you skipped and try them again.

7. **False**. Some people work well with low calming music in the background. When you need to concentrate on homework, avoid music that is emotional or has loud, complicated rhythms.

8. **True**. Alberta Learning puts many high school textbooks on audiotape. Check with your school counsellor to see if these tapes are available in your school.

9. **False**. Studies show that students who belong to at least one extracurricular activity have a greater chance of staying in school. If you're having difficulties, you may have to cut back on extra activities. But having at least one activity that you enjoy may help you feel more connected and relaxed in school.

10. **False**. When in doubt, guess the answer (unless there is a penalty for guessing).

Answer key: Guess the key words

An acronym is a key word in which each letter stands for a specific word or idea. Acronyms are short cuts to help you remember and use important information.

For example, the COPS strategy for editing reminds you to consider:

C*apitalization*
O*rganization*
P*unctuation, and*
S*pelling.*

Look at the acronyms below and guess the key words that might be part of each strategy. One clue is provided.

Use this strategy to remind yourself of what to do when writing a test— **S***chedule your time* **C***lue words* **O***mit difficult questions* **R***ead directions carefully* **E***stimate your answers* **R***eview your work* page 45, student resource	To predict possible test questions, consider these factors— **C***ritical ideas* **H***igher order questions* **A***ccuracy* **N***umber* **C***larity* **E***xamine* page 39, student resource
Effective goals are— **S***pecific* **M***easurable* **A***chievable* **R***ealistic* **T***ime-based* page 8, student resource	Use this strategy to help you prepare for an oral presentation— **C***heck the audience* **H***ave eye contact* **E***xpress yourself* **C***lear—speak so everyone understands* **K***een to be heard* page 56, student resource

Now, find the strategy in *Make School Work for You* that matches each acronym. Compare your key words with those in the book. Have you improved on the strategies?

Sample instructional activities

This section contains ideas for teaching and exploring specific skills and concepts contained in each chapter of the student resource.

Chapter 1: Know Yourself

Success rules! *page 2, student resource*
Students list reasons why they want to be successful in school, and share these with a partner and the class. Make a class chart listing why it's important to be successful in school.

Career connections
Students identify careers they are interested in. They research their career choices and report back to the class. Research should include what high school marks and credits they need to qualify for training, the length and kind of training necessary and the opportunities available.

Learning challenges you *page 2, student resource*
Students complete the Uncover your challenges inventory, Activity 1, pages 82–83 in the student resource, to identify their learning challenges. Students meet in pairs or small groups to discuss individual challenges and brainstorm coping strategies. This activity is reprinted on pages 44–45 of this guide.

Strength training *page 3, student resource*
Students complete the Know your own strengths inventory, Activity 2, page 84 in the student resource. They meet in pairs or small groups to discuss how they can use their strengths to become better learners. This activity is reprinted on page 46 of this guide.

If it's working, why fix it? *page 3, student resource*
Students work alone, in pairs or in small groups to generate lists of factors that help make learning successful. The What works for me inventory, Activity 3, pages 85–86 in the student resource, provides a list of questions students should ask themselves. Have students design posters of effective learning strategies and post them in the classroom. Students can keep personalized lists inside their binders and in their study areas at home. This activity is reprinted on pages 47–48 of this guide.

Resource development *page 4, student resource*
Working in four groups, students research resources available in their school and community. Assign each group one resource, such as extra support, technology, library resources and specialized programs. Have groups answer questions about their resources and report their findings to the class.

Help! *pages 5–6, student resource*
Students brainstorm the kinds of help they need in the classroom. Using "Ask for what you need" outlined on page 5 in the student resource, students work with partners to write scripts in which they ask for something they need.

Self-
knowledge

Talking to yourself again? *page 7, student resource*
Discuss negative and positive self-talk and the effects of each on learning. Working alone, students generate two lists, one with examples of negative self-talk and one with examples of positive self-talk they use. Have students share their lists with a partner and then with the group. They can add to their own lists as they hear new ideas. Have students design cue cards with positive self-talk statements to place on their desks or their study areas at home.

Goal for it *page 8, student resource*
Students choose one reason to succeed from the lists generated in *Success rules!* They then develop a goal and an action plan to help achieve that goal. For example, if the reason is to achieve high marks to stay on a sports team, the goal might be, "To study for one hour every day." Students keep copies of their goals in their binders, lockers and study areas at home. Use the Goal setting organizer, Activity 4, page 87 in the student resource to record goals. This activity is reprinted on page 49 of this guide.

Stress busters *pages 10–11, student resource*
Students work in groups to identify situations that cause them stress. For each cause, they develop two coping strategies. Discuss the effects of stress on performance.

Learn from your mistakes *page 11, student resource*
Students write about one mistake they made in the past three months and what they learned from it.

Chapter 2: Get Organized

Organizing 101 *page 14, student resource*
Students share tips on getting and staying organized. They discuss what's working for them and what isn't. Students choose one area that they know they can improve on and set a one-month goal to work on that area.

What's your limit? *page 15, student resource*
Students complete the Know your time limits checklist, Activity 5, page 88 in the student resource to gain a realistic understanding of their current time commitments. This activity is reprinted on page 50 of this guide.

I'm on top of it!

Marking time *pages 15–16, student resource*
Students create personal weekly schedules. They can keep copies in their lockers, binders and study areas at home. After one week, students evaluate how well their schedules worked and make necessary changes. A blank schedule can be found in Activity 6, page 89 in the student resource. This activity is reprinted on page 51 of this guide.

Just do it *page 17, student resource*
For one week, students create to-do lists at the start of each day. They monitor their success in completing the lists and report back on what worked and what didn't. Students discuss the systems they used to make their lists work; for example, how they set priorities.

Working backwards *pages 18–19, student resource*
Students choose one assignment and create a back plan for completing the assignment by the due date.

Homework, oh homework *pages 22–23, student resource*
Students use Venn diagrams to compare and contrast homework and in-class work. Have students discuss the similarities and differences, and what kinds of skills they need in each situation.

Locker logic *page 24, student resource*
Students design checklists to monitor their locker organization. They share their checklists with the group, adding ideas they gather from each other.

Chapter 3: Make Every Class Count

Be there *pages 25–28, student resource*
Read and discuss the ideas for how to be more present in body and mind. Students design mini posters with these key ideas and display them on a bulletin board in class or in the school library.

Concentration begins now *page 29, student resource*
Students develop a strategy and mnemonic for concentration. Share the mnemonics with the class and make posters of the ones that work well.

Take note *pages 29–31, student resource*
Read and discuss the hints for effective note taking. Work through the sample notes on democracy and identify which hints were used and which were not. Present a lesson and have students take notes. Then, students use the Note-taking inventory, Activity 8, page 91 in the student resource, to complete a peer review. Students give each other positive feedback and suggestions for improvement. This activity is reprinted on page 53 of this guide.

Take note of the options *pages 32–34, student resource*
After a lesson involving note taking, divide students into three groups and assign each group a different method for rewriting their notes. Use Activity 7, page 90 in the student resource. Each group completes the activity on an overhead transparency so it can be displayed for the class to view and discuss. Compare different note-taking formats and discuss the benefits and limitations of each. This activity is reprinted on page 52 of this guide.

Chapter 4: Use Tests to Show What You Know

Test smarts *page 36, student resource*
Students work alone or in pairs to complete a study organizer for a test on note taking. Use the blank Study organizer, Activity 9, page 92 in the student resource. See Chapter 3 of *Make School Work for You* for additional information on note taking. This activity is reprinted on page 54 of this guide.

Highlighting *page 38, student resource*
Provide students with a piece of text that is easy to read. Working alone or in pairs, students practise highlighting key words in the text. Ask students to record the number of key words they highlight. Take a poll, listing the fewest, the most and some numbers in between. Students work alone or in pairs to create webs using their key words. Write the webs on overhead transparencies so they can be displayed and discussed. In the discussion, note the variety of webs and discuss how different styles work for different people in different situations. Discuss how webs can be used as a study tool, a plan for writing papers or a guide for oral presentations.

Take a chance *page 39, student resource*
Using the CHANCE strategy, students work in pairs or small groups to predict test questions for a current unit of work. As a class, make a list of students' questions. Revise any questions that are vague or confusing. Use these questions as a study tool. Choose the best for the actual test.

Study smarts *pages 40–41, student resource*
Write each of the 10 study tricks on an index card. Assign pairs of students one trick to use to prepare for a test on Chapter 2, Get Organized (or another unit of work if there is a test coming up). Students exchange study tools and discuss how each worked.

A special request *page 42, student resource*
Students write scripts in which they ask for a specific test-taking accommodation. Use role play to practise these scripts.

Splashdown *page 43, student resource*
Students complete a splashdown of everything they learned about showing what they know on tests. Give a two-minute time limit so students have an idea of how much time they should take in an actual test situation. Practise doing splashdowns of topics students are currently studying.

Wise guy *page 44, student resource*

Students brainstorm advice on taking tests. Go through the tips in *Make School Work for You* and add to the list. Create a checklist for students to self-monitor their own test-taking behaviours.

He shoots, he scores *page 45, student resource*

Students design cue cards for the SCORER strategy.

Anxiety advantage *page 46, student resource*

Survey what students do to relax when they are anxious. Discuss the pros and cons of each strategy. Practise the relaxation technique on page 46 in the student resource.

Too many choices *pages 46–47, student resource*

Demonstrate the steps for taking multiple-choice tests by putting examples on an overhead and working through them as a group. Using additional questions from old tests, students can practise the steps on their own or in pairs. As a wrap-up activity, students make up multiple-choice questions about test-taking skills.

It's not over yet *page 48, student resource*

Students review an old test with a partner, and identify where they did well and where they made errors. Students create tip sheets to remind them of what they need to do on the next test, such as rereading directions and checking answers.

Be
test-wise!

Chapter 5: Present Your Learning

Plan a paragraph *pages 50–51, student resource*
Model how to use the Paragraph planner, Activity 10, page 93 in the student resource. Take suggestions from students and write in key words on an overhead transparency. Students then write a paragraph from the key words, independently or with a partner. Compare and discuss completed paragraphs. This activity is reprinted on page 55 of this guide.

Everyone needs a little structure
pages 52–53, student resource
Model how to use the Linear outline, Activity 11, page 94 in the student resource. Take suggestions from students and write in key words on an overhead transparency. Assign each student a subtopic to write a paragraph on, using information in the outline. Compare and discuss completed paragraphs. This activity is reprinted on page 56 of this guide.

Tow froms of spelling *pages 52–53, student resource*
Brainstorm common spelling errors students make even when using computer spell checkers. The most common error is word substitutions, such as *tow* for *two* or *from* for *form*. Students make cue cards of specific words they should watch for when proofreading written work.

I propose *page 55, student resource*
Students work in pairs to draft a one-page proposal for an alternative project to replace an English essay assignment.

Checkmate *page 56, student resource*
Using the CHECK strategy, students make up cue cards or score sheets for an oral presentation.

Whose line is it anyway? *page 56, student resource*
Many incidents of plagiarism are unintentional. Demonstrate different ways to credit material. Students can survey teachers in different subject areas and find out what style of footnoting they expect. Use this information to create a guide sheet for footnoting and referencing material, including information taken from the Internet.

Chapter 6: Get Along with Others

What's happening? *page 58, student resource*
Brainstorm a list of extracurricular opportunities in school. Working in pairs or small groups, students design posters outlining the who, what, where, when and why of individual activities.

What am I saying? *page 59, student resource*
Students brainstorm a list of different body messages people send in the classroom, such as "I don't care," "Leave me alone" and "I'm listening." Students draw cartoons illustrating the body language of each message.

Questions count *page 60, student resource*
Encourage students to monitor and count how many questions they ask in class over a one-week period.

Two heads are better *pages 60–65, student resource*
Students design posters illustrating how to work successfully in pairs or small groups.

Work it out *pages 65–66, student resource*
Brainstorm a list of problem situations that might occur when students work in pairs or small groups. Students choose one situation and describe it in a letter to an advice columnist. Students trade letters and offer advice on the problems, Ann Landers' style.

Getting along with others *page 66, student resource*
Students complete the Getting along with others inventory, Activity 12, pages 95–96 in the student resource and use the information to identify behaviours they want to improve. This activity is reprinted on pages 57–58 of this guide.

Snappy comebacks *page 66, student resource*
Challenge students to come up with snappy comebacks to common forms of teasing. Brainstorm specific insults, such as "Hey, ugly!" "How stupid are you?" "Where do you get your clothes?" and generate a list of 10 replies that are humourous but respectful.

Silent majority *pages 67–68, student resource*
Students design posters discouraging bullying.

Chapter 7: Get People on Your Side

Draft pick *page 69, student resource*
Students design mind maps indicating all the people who are part of their learning team this term. Use key words, graphics and colour.

Dear teacher *page 70, student resource*
Students choose a challenging subject and write a letter to the teacher requesting an accommodation. Before beginning, brainstorm a list of appropriate accommodations students might request.

Friends in high places *page 71, student resource*
On index cards, students list one strategy for getting teachers on their side. Each student draws one card and acts on the suggestion the next day. Students report back to the class and choose another card for the next day. Use role playing to practise the strategies.

May I have a few minutes of your time?
page 72, student resource
Students use the information in this section to create role plays about approaching teachers with specific problems.

Who can I ask? *pages 72–73, student resource*
Students create webs or mind maps listing all the potential sources of feedback this term. Some sources will be people, such as classmates or teachers. Other sources will be the results of actions, such as attendance records and report cards.

Wanted poster *pages 73–74, student resource*
Students use the information in this section to design posters for a study group. Posters should include the purpose, who will benefit, where and when the group will meet, and expectations for participating members.

Chapter 8: Stay Motivated

Looking over the game plan *page 75, student resource*
Review individual and class goals set at the beginning of the term. Students and teachers can use this information to analyze progress and write revised or related new goals for the remainder of the term.

Your brilliant career *page 75, student resource*
Students create Venn diagrams indicating similarities and differences between high school and the work place.

What counts? *page 76, student resource*
Challenge students to write down the formula for final marks for each course they are taking this term.

Room for change *page 76, student resource*
Students analyze a marked assignment from earlier in the term and identify three things they could have done to earn a higher mark. Students share their analysis with a partner and brainstorm additional factors that might have raised their marks.

Gathering food for thought *page 76, student resource*
Students design a data-keeping chart to record who and when they ask for feedback for a one-week period.

And the winner is ... *page 77, student resource*
Brainstorm a list of rewards students can give themselves when they've done a good job.

To the limit *page 77, student resource*
Using a list of school-related tasks, students estimate how many minutes it would take to complete each. Compare results and try to find a realistic class average for common tasks.

Keep the wheels turning *page 77, student resource*
Students make cue cards for what to do when they are stuck.

Bag of tricks *page 77, student resource*
Brainstorm different ways to study. Working in pairs, students design posters to illustrate different study methods. Display the posters in the school library.

Chapter 8: Stay Motivated (continued)

Solve it *page 78, student resource*
Students design graphic organizers for the problem-solving steps in this section. Brainstorm sample problems and write them on paper slips. Students draw a sample problem and work out a solution following the steps on the graphic organizer.

Howdy stranger *page 78, student resource*
As a class, generate a list of interesting (but non-invasive) questions. Students draw names for partners and predict the answers to the questions before interviewing the partner. Students interview their partners for three minutes and share three interesting facts from the interviews with the class.

Let me show you *page 79, student resource*
Students make a list of five special skills they could share with someone else. They choose one and design an ad offering to share their skills with other students in the class.

Letting go *page 79, student resource*
Students create webs or mind maps to illustrate specific mistakes they have made in the past that it is time to let go of. They can use key phrases and graphics to create a visualization that works for them.

Risky business *page 79, student resource*
Students make lists of new activities to try in class, at school and with their friends.

The flip side *page 79, student resource*
Students turn mistakes into funny stories about themselves. They share their stories with a partner.

Square eyes *page 79, student resource*
Students design data-keeping charts to monitor their own television viewing over a three-week period. Collect results and convert to class averages. Display the results in a graph or table. Working in small groups, students prepare arguments for why television viewing is a positive recreational pastime and why television viewing is a negative recreational pastime.

Manage your own morale *page 80, student resource*
Students create a class collection of inspiring quotes, poems, song lyrics and cartoons.

Chapter 8: Stay Motivated (continued)

Techno-news *page 80, student resource*
Students research a new computer program, technical gadget or Internet site and give a three-minute techno-talk to the class.

The learning channel *page 80, student resource*
Set up a classroom bulletin board about learning, study skills and brain research. Ask students to bring in related news stories or articles throughout the term.

Assessing student understanding

Teachers can assess student understanding of the concepts in *Make School Work for You* in a number of ways, including monitoring, performance tasks, projects and portfolios. Use a variety of assessment and discussion strategies to give students a range of opportunities to show what they know.

Monitoring and discussion

Encourage students to develop self-monitoring practices so they can reflect on their own learning, track their use of strategies throughout the school day and use this information to set new goals.

Performance tasks

Performance tasks can be used to assess students' knowledge at the end of each chapter or the end of a term. Shorter tasks scheduled at regular intervals help students group the material they are learning and identify areas in which they need additional practice.

Design performance tasks that assess students' ability to apply the skills and strategies they learn in class. For example, ask students to highlight a piece of text and create a web rather than asking a memory question, such as "What percentage of the text should be highlighted?"

Projects

Students can use projects to demonstrate their understanding of a chapter, skill or strategy. For example, a project on Chapter 1, Know Yourself, could have students reflect on themselves as learners and find ways to represent the self-knowledge they gained as they worked through the chapter.

Projects can take many forms, including fan-fold displays, posters, oral presentations and webs. Offer students a variety of formats so they can choose the one that best matches their learning style and the demands of the particular assignment.

Portfolios

Students can create portfolios which include samples of their work from a specific unit of study. The collected work should demonstrate how they understand and are using the skills and strategies introduced in the unit. Use a table of contents, rubric or sample portfolio to ensure expectations and standards are clear and understandable at the beginning of the process.

Students can also include samples of work from other courses to demonstrate that they are transferring new knowledge and skills across the curriculum in a variety of learning situations.

Pieces from this portfolio may be included in an ongoing career portfolio.

Rubric for *Make School Work for You* portfolio

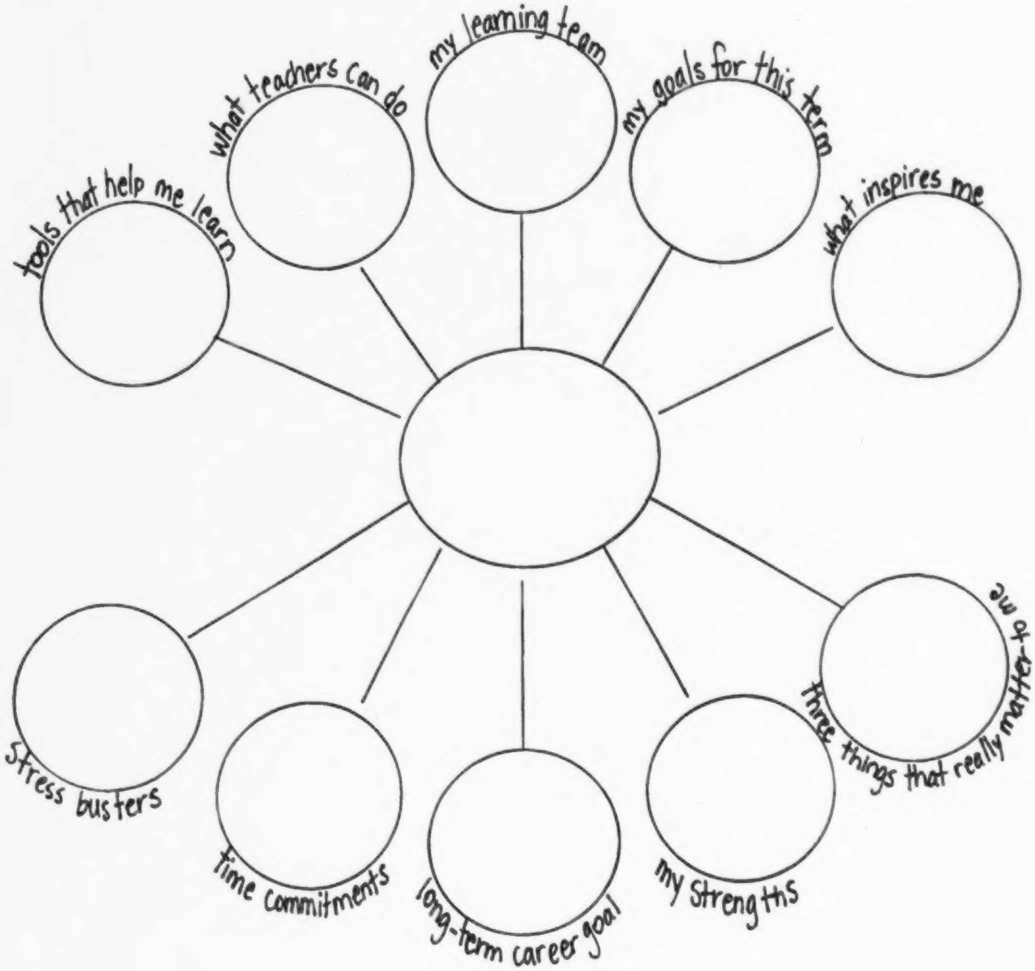
	(4) *Standard of excellence*	(3) *Exceeds acceptable standard*	(2) *Meets acceptable standard*	(1) *Needs improvement to meet acceptable standard*
Content	• Includes 10 or more samples of work from the course. • Includes 5 or more samples of work from other courses. • Ten or more skills and strategies are represented. • All work samples demonstrate an excellent understanding of the skills and strategies. • All work samples demonstrate an excellent ability to apply the skills and strategies in a variety of contexts.	• Includes 7–9 samples of work from the course. • Includes 4 samples of work from other courses. • Eight to nine skills and strategies are represented. • All work samples demonstrate an understanding of the skills and strategies. • All work samples demonstrate an ability to apply the skills and strategies in a variety of contexts.	• Includes 5–6 samples of work from the course. • Includes 3 samples of work from other courses. • Six to seven skills and strategies are represented. • Most work samples demonstrate an understanding of the skills and strategies. • Most work samples demonstrate an ability to apply the skills and strategies in a variety of contexts.	• Includes 3–4 samples of work from the course. • Includes 2 samples of work from other courses. • Three to five skills and strategies are represented. • Work samples demonstrate a limited understanding of the skills and strategies. • Work samples demonstrate a limited ability to apply the skills and strategies in a variety of contexts.
Organization & Format	• System of organization is clear, user friendly and enhances data presented. • Portfolio is visually appealing throughout and engages the reader's interest and imagination.	• System of organization is clear and user friendly. • Portfolio is visually appealing and engages the reader's interest.	• System of organization is evident. • Portfolio is visually appealing in some sections.	• System of organization is confusing. • Portfolio shows limited attempt to be visually appealing.

Sample performance tasks

Student name: ______________________ Date: ____________________

Personal inventory

★ Complete the following web with key words and phrases that describe your personal learning styles and preferences.


tools that help me learn
what teachers can do
my learning team
my goals for this term
what inspires me
three things that really matter to me
my strengths
long-term career goal
time commitments
stress busters

Student name: ______________________________ Date: ______________________________

Note-taking splashdown

★ Do a three-minute splashdown of everything you know about effective note taking.

Student name: ____________________ Date: ____________________

Essay planner: how to study for a test

★ Complete this paragraph planner for an essay on how to study for a test.[1]

Key Words

Introductory sentence (Tell what you are going to write about and grab your reader's interest.)

First detail sentence

↓

Follow-up sentence (more information about first detail)

Second detail sentence

↓

Follow-up sentence (more information about second detail)

Third detail sentence

↓

Follow-up sentence (more information about third detail)

Closing sentence (Say your opening sentence in a different way.)

---

[1] From Edmonton Public Schools, *Thinking Tools for Kids: Practical Organizers* (Edmonton, AB: Edmonton Public Schools, Resource Development Services, 1999), p. 219. Reproduced with permission.

Student name: ______________________ Date: ______________________

Highlighting key words and making a web

★ Highlight the key words in the following passage and then use the key words to make a web.

Good memory isn't confined to humans, although, contrary to the old myth, it isn't the elephant that never forgets—it's the dolphin. According to the Severstsov Institute in Moscow, the bottle-nosed dolphin has some tricks few of us could match. One is the ability to put half its brain to sleep while keeping the other half awake. That way it can keep watch for sharks while having a snooze. (One eye remains open.) After about an hour, the dolphin switches brains, sleeping with the other half and waking the sleeping half up.

Dolphin memory matches the very best that humanity has to offer. Even a perfectly average dolphin can listen to a half an hour of those high-pitched clicks they use, then play them back *exactly*, including precise click length and pitch.[2]

Number of words highlighted: ______

---

[2] Excerpted from Herbie Brennan, *Memory* (New York, NY: Scholastic Inc., 1997), p. 32.

Student name: ______________________________ Date: ____________________________

Study groups

★ Use the space below to design a poster to recruit new members for a study group. (Be sure to answer all the 5 Ws and an H questions within the information on your poster.)

Partner problem solving

★ Their presentation is due in a week and things are not working out between Lee and her social studies partner. Lee feels frustrated and is worried that the project will not be finished on time. What are some things Lee can say to her partner that might help solve the problem?

Student name: ______________________ Date: ______________________

Binder checklist

★ Design a checklist for an organized binder. On the numbered lines, write what you will check for. Be as specific as possible. On the vertical lines above the check boxes, write describing words that indicate how you will rate each item on your binder check.

Binder check

I will look for:

1. Table of contents	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Goal setting

★ Darcy wants to go on the school ski trip. The cost of the trip is $400. Students must have a B average in all core subjects to go on the trip.

A. Make a list of at least three goals Darcy will need to achieve in order to make this trip a reality.

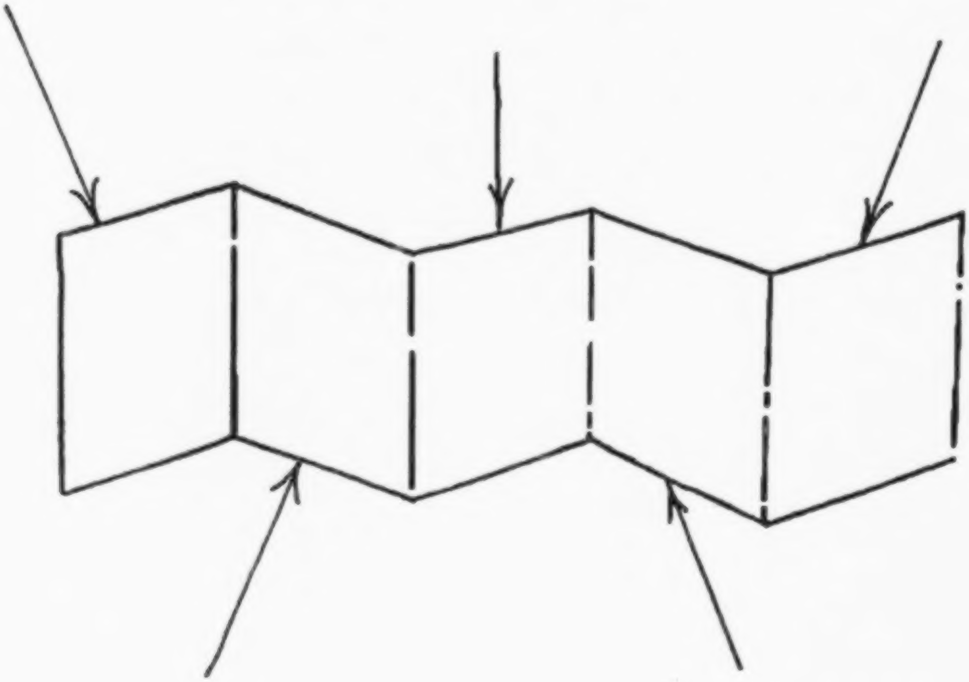
B. Choose one of the goals and develop a step-by-step action plan for reaching that goal.

Student name: ______________________________ Date: ____________________________

Project proposal

★ The teacher assigned a five-page essay as a final project for the novel your class is studying. You enjoy the novel and have many ideas about it, but you think you could show your learning better through another kind of project. You need to convince your teacher that a fan fold could be an effective way to show your understanding and appreciation of the novel.

- Use a novel that you are familiar with to design a plan for a fan fold containing the same information an essay would contain. The information on the fan fold will be in point form and will include graphics.
- Use key words to describe the specific information you will include on each panel and think about how you will present the information; for example, in a list, as a graph, comparison chart or illustration.



Student name: ______________________ Date: ______________________

Scoring guide

	Criteria
Personal inventory web _____/10	• 1 point for each completed bubble; key phrase should be specific (0.5 point may be awarded for less-specific phrases)
Note-taking splashdown _____/10	• 1 point for each idea; key phrase should be specific (0.5 point may be awarded for less-specific phrases)
Essay planner: how to study for a test _____/10	• 1 point for each idea clearly expressed as key words for total of 8 (0.5 point may be awarded for less-specific phrases) • 1 point each for strong introductory and closing sentences for total of 2 (0.5 point may be awarded for basic sentences)
Highlighting key words and making a web _____/10	• 5 points for less than 30 key words highlighted (including less than 5 nonessential words) *or* • 3 points for less than 40 key words highlighted (including less than 10 nonessential words) • 5 points for clearly developed web with 6 key points (including less than 3 nonessential words) *or* • 3 points for basic web with 4 key points (including less than 5 nonessential words)
Study groups _____/6	• 1 point for each phrase that addresses who, what, where, when, why and how of study groups for a total of 6
Partner problem solving _____/5	• 1 point for nonjudgmental language (no blaming) • 1 point for focus on solving problem rather than changing person • 1 point for proposing solution • 1 point for setting appropriate boundaries • 1 point for asking for solutions, checking with partner
Binder checklist _____/5	• 1 point for each clearly defined organizational strategy for a total of 5
Goal setting _____/10	• 1 point for each goal, for total of 3 • 3 points for step-by-step action plan • 2 points for clear timelines • 2 points for strategy for evaluating success
Project proposal _____/5	• 1 point for each panel plan, in which key phrases describe content, for a total of 5. (Must include reference to at least 3 graphics)

Blackline masters from the Activities section of the student resource

Activity 1

Uncover your challenges inventory

Date: ____________________

Name: ____________________

		always	usually	sometimes	not yet
1.	I come to school every day.	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.	I come to class on time.	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.	I come to class with the materials I need.	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	I come to class prepared; e.g., textbook read, assignments complete.	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.	I leave my worries outside the classroom door.	☐	☐	☐	☐
6.	I can follow written directions.	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.	I can follow spoken directions.	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.	I understand the new ideas the teacher presents.	☐	☐	☐	☐
9.	I can focus my attention in class.	☐	☐	☐	☐
10.	I contribute to class discussions.	☐	☐	☐	☐
11.	I take accurate and detailed notes.	☐	☐	☐	☐
12.	My notebooks are organized and complete.	☐	☐	☐	☐
13.	I am clear and concise when writing.	☐	☐	☐	☐
14.	My written work is accurate, legible and organized.	☐	☐	☐	☐
15.	I finish assignments within time limits.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Activity I (continued)

Uncover your challenges inventory

	always	usually	sometimes	not yet
16. I know when and who to ask for help.	☐	☐	☐	☐
17. I can sit still for long periods of time.	☐	☐	☐	☐
18. I do not distract or chat with others.	☐	☐	☐	☐
19. I remain calm and focused during tests.	☐	☐	☐	☐
20. I do well on tests.	☐	☐	☐	☐

A. To get more feedback about my in-class behaviour I could talk with:

B. Do teachers ever mention a specific in-class behaviour to you? For example, "Don't chat with your neighbours," or "You need to bring a pencil everyday." Write these comments down even if you don't like them or agree with them — there may be helpful information in this feedback.

Activity 2

Date: ____________

Name: ____________

Know your own strengths inventory

A. List four successful experiences you have had in the last 12 months:

- ____________
- ____________
- ____________
- ____________

B. List four everyday things you do well:

- ____________
- ____________
- ____________
- ____________

C. List two things you could teach someone else:

- ____________
- ____________

D. List 10 positive words to describe yourself:

- ____________
- ____________
- ____________
- ____________
- ____________
- ____________
- ____________
- ____________
- ____________
- ____________

E. List two things that really matter to you:

- ____________
- ____________

F. List two things you can do for yourself that will always makes you feel good:

- ____________
- ____________

G. List two people who you can count on for help and support:

- ____________
- ____________

Activity 3

What works for me inventory

Date: ____________________

Name: ____________________

A. How I look after myself

- How much sleep do I need? ____________________
- What kind of food makes me feel the most alert? ____________________
- What snacks are good energy sources? ____________________
- What times of the day do I need to eat? ____________________
- What time of the day do I have the most energy? ____________________
- What time of the day do I have the least energy? ____________________
- What type of exercise makes me feel energized? ____________________
- What kinds of activities help me relax? ____________________

B. Tools that help me learn

- What writing tool works best for me (type of pen, pencil, colour of ink)? __________
- What kind of paper helps me keep organized (wide-ruled, unlined, wide margins, prepunched)? ____________________
- What colour paper do I find the easiest to read? ____________________
- What binder system works for me? ____________________
- What other supplies help me keep organized; e.g., white-out, post-it notes, ruler?
  ____
- What calculator works best for me; e.g., size, features? ____________________
- What spellchecker works best for me? ____________________
- What is my favourite dictionary? ____________________
- What other reference books help me learn? ____________________
- What computer programs are helpful to my learning? ____________________

C. In the classroom

- What seat in the classroom works best for me? ____________________
- What do I read best from?
  __ chalkboard __ overhead __ projector __ chart paper __ my own copy
- Does the colour of ink (or chalk) make a difference? ____________________
- Does the type of print; e.g., printed, handwritten or typed, make a difference? _____
  ____
- Does the size and spacing of print make a difference? ____________________

Activity 3 (continued)

What works for me inventory

D. Rank in order from 1 to 12 which directions work best for me:

____ teacher explains aloud
____ teacher writes directions on the board
____ teacher does example on the board
____ teacher asks another student to demonstrate
____ teacher asks all students to try a sample at their desks
____ I read the directions while the teacher reads them
____ I read the directions on my own
____ teacher shows me at my desk
____ another student explains a second time and answers my questions
____ I watch what another student does
____ I try it on my own and then check with teacher
____ I try it on my own and then compare with another student

E. Tricks I use to keep myself organized (see page 14 for ideas):

____
____
____
____
____
____

F. Tricks I use to keep myself focused and on task in class (see pages 25–29 for ideas):

____
____
____

G. Special things that teachers can do to help me learn:

____
____
____
____
____
____

Activity 4

Goal setting organizer

Date: ____________

Name: ____________

Is your goal
- ☐ Specific?
- ☐ Measurable?
- ☐ Achievable?
- ☐ Realistic?
- ☐ Time-based?

Goal My goal is to …

Rationale I chose this goal because …

Action plan To reach this goal I will …

Measurement How will I know if I am successful?

Evaluation What would I do differently in the future?

Activity 5

Date: ____________________

Name: ____________________

Know your time limits checklist

I would like to participate in the following extracurricular activities:

- ______________________________ (hours per week) ______
- ______________________________ (hours per week) ______
- ______________________________ (hours per week) ______

My time commitments this year are:

A. My family responsibilities after school:

- ______________________________ (hours per week) ______
- ______________________________ (hours per week) ______
- ______________________________ (hours per week) ______

B. My athletic/team sport commitments after school:

- ______________________________ (hours per week) ______
- ______________________________ (hours per week) ______
- ______________________________ (hours per week) ______

C. Additional lessons, organizations or volunteer commitments:

- ______________________________ (hours per week) ______
- ______________________________ (hours per week) ______
- ______________________________ (hours per week) ______

D. My part-time job commitment during the school year:

- ______________________________ (hours per week) ______
- ______________________________ (hours per week) ______
- ______________________________ (hours per week) ______

E. Other:

- ______________________________ (hours per week) ______
- ______________________________ (hours per week) ______
- ______________________________ (hours per week) ______

Activity 6

Daily schedule

Date: ____________________

Name: ____________________

Week of ______________________________ to ______________________________

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
8:00							
9:00							
10:00							
11:00							
12:00							
1:00							
2:00							
3:00							
4:00							
5:00							
6:00							
7:00							
8:00							
9:00							

Activity 7

Note-taking formats

Name ______________________________

Column note-taking

Subject: Date:

Main ideas	Supporting details

Question and answer note-taking

Subject: Date:

Questions	Supporting details

Activity 8

Date: ____________________

Name: ____________________

Note-taking inventory[37]

From time to time, it's smart to check the quality of your notes to see how you're doing. Then you'll know if you need to make any changes or improvements.

Check a sample of your class notes with this note-taking inventory.

My notes contain:	Yes	Not yet
1. Date of class	☐	☐
2. Title	☐	☐
3. Writing neat enough to read	☐	☐
4. No more than one idea per line	☐	☐
5. Plenty of blank space to add extra ideas later	☐	☐
6. All main ideas	☐	☐
7. All important details	☐	☐
8. All key terms and definitions	☐	☐
9. Abbreviations as appropriate	☐	☐
10. No unnecessary words	☐	☐

Count one point for each Yes box checked and add up your points to see how you score ______

9–10 points:	You're a great note-taker!
7–8 points:	You're a good note-taker.
5–6 points:	You need to take better notes.
4 points or less:	Make a note of this: practise, practise, practise!

---

[37] Adapted from *School Power: Study Skill Strategies for Succeeding in School (Revised and Updated Edition)* (p. 31) by Jeanne Shay Schumm, Ph.D. © 2001. Used with permission from Free Spirit Publishing Inc., Minneapolis, MN: 1-800-735-7323; *www.freespirit.com*. All rights reserved.

Activity 9

Study organizer[38]

Date: ________________

Name: ________________

A. DEFINITIONS/TERMS
(Know what these words mean and be able to use them.)

B. CLASSIFY
(Be able to compare and contrast — know the similarities and differences.)

C. EXPLAIN
("What if . . ." "Tell why . . ." "Give reasons . . .")

D. DRAW (and label)

E. DEMONSTRATE

---

[38] From Dana Antayá-Moore and Catherine M. Walker, *Smart Learning: Strategies for Parents, Teachers and Kids* (Edmonton, AB: Smart Learning, 1996), p. 8. Reproduced with permission. For ordering information, fax 780-439-3915.

Activity 10

Paragraph planner [39]

Date: ____________________

Name: ____________________

Topic: ____

Key words

Introductory sentence (Tell what you are going to write about and grab your reader's interest.)

First detail sentence

Follow-up sentence (more information about first detail)

Second detail sentence

Follow-up sentence (more information about second detail)

Third detail sentence

Follow-up sentence (more information about third detail)

Closing sentence (Say your opening sentence in a different way.)

---

[39] From Edmonton Public Schools, *Thinking Tools for Kids: Practical Organizers* (Edmonton, AB: Edmonton Public Schools, Resource Development Services, 1999), p. 219. Reproduced with permission.

Activity 11

Linear outline

Date: ____________________

Name: ____________________

Subject/Title

Introduction

Subtopics

1. ____________________ 2. ____________________ 3. ____________________

Supporting Information

Summary

References

Activity 12

Date: ____________________

Name: ____________________

Getting along with others inventory

In class

	always	usually	sometimes	not yet
• I arrive in class on time.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I bring needed books and supplies.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I greet other students as I enter the classroom.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I answer questions with a few sentences.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• When I start a conversation, I check that the other people appear interested.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I limit small talk to before and after class.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I sit up straight.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I remove distracting hoods and hats.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I make eye contact with others.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I show active listening by nodding my head and turning to the speaker.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I volunteer at least two answers per class.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• If I've missed directions, I look to other students for clues.	☐	☐	☐	☐

With partners and in small groups

• I am willing to work with a variety of partners.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I try to make others feel comfortable by making small talk.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I show that I'm willing to work with others by moving closer.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I am polite to people I would rather not work with.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I listen carefully to directions.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I clarify directions with my partners.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I make a rough plan.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Activity 12 (continued)

Getting along with others inventory

	always	usually	sometimes	not yet
• I check the deadlines.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I use a quiet voice.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I stay with my group and focus on the task.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I resist complaining about the assignment.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I do my share of the work.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I volunteer ideas.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I show good listening.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I encourage others to contribute their ideas.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I refrain from put-downs of other people's ideas.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I am willing to try new roles, even if I'm uncomfortable.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I support my partners in group presentations.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Solving problems				
• I use all my skills to build a positive working relationship with partners.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I let partners know when I think we have a problem.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I am willing to make a new plan and start over.	☐	☐	☐	☐
• If necessary, I'll share my concerns with the teacher.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Getting connected				
• I participate in at least one extracurricular activity each term.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Evaluation and feedback

We hope this *Teacher Implementation Guide for Make School Work for You* addresses many of the issues and questions you have about using this student resource in your classroom. Please take some time to share your thoughts with us on the usefulness of this resource and forward your feedback to the Learning and Teaching Resources Branch, Alberta Learning.

How do you rate the *Teacher Implementation Guide for Make School Work for You*?

	Yes	**No**	**Comments**
Practical?	☐	☐	
Easy to understand?	☐	☐	
Well-organized?	☐	☐	
Complete?	☐	☐	

Overall rating	4 Excellent	3 Good	2 Fair	1 Poor

We welcome your comments and suggestions for future Alberta Learning resources.

Please return this page to:

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Alberta Learning
5th Floor, West Devonian Building
11160 Jasper Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 0L2
Fax: 780–422–0576

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- how to assess student understanding.

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